Aboriginal Women and Policy Development

Aboriginal Women's Conference
March 3rd-4th, 2009
Gander, NL

Newfoundland
Labrador

Executive Summary

The fourth Provincial Aboriginal Women's Conference took place from March 3 to 4, 2009 (Agenda – Appendix A) in Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador.

The conference brought together approximately 46 Aboriginal women from a variety of different communities including Innu, Inuit, Mi'kmaq and Metis as well as representatives of Aboriginal women living in various urban areas.

The Honourable Patty Pottle, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, represented the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador at the evening banquet of the conference.

The focus of this year's conference was ***"Aboriginal Women and Policy Development,"*** which is one of the priority areas identified by Aboriginal women through previous conferences. In developing this agenda, the Steering Committee felt that showcasing best practices in policy development would assist women in moving the "Good Life" agenda forward in their respective communities.

The fourth Aboriginal Women's Conference first looked at the Historical Overview of Aboriginal Women. Furthermore, delegates were provided with the opportunity to review the structures that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has in place to develop policies. The agenda then allowed for Aboriginal government/entities to showcase the best practices that their governments/organizations have established.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, in response to recommendations stemming from the National Aboriginal Women's Summit and previous Aboriginal Women Conferences commissioned the development of a Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis. It was decided that this process be presented at this year's conference to gain feedback and to provide direction to government as to how to proceed with this work.

The delegates were given the opportunity to look at how gender based analysis could be applied to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder specifically and the model of Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis that the Provincial Government is considering.

Finally, conference delegates had an opportunity to voice thoughts and concerns about Culturally Relevant Gendered Based Analysis and how this could affect their communities, their programs and their policies.

Representatives from all Aboriginal groups in the province participated in the conference. The conference was planned by the steering committee, (List – Appendix B) made up of representatives from Aboriginal groups, specifically the

National Aboriginal Women's Summit (NAWS) working group, the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs and the Women's Policy Office. The Steering Committee invited the delegates from their respective groups to the conference.

The conference delegates, from youth to elders, represent a wide variety of occupations and disciplines, creating an excellent cross section of the strengths and experiences of Aboriginal women from this province.

Aboriginal women have always played an important role in bringing social and economic change into communities. They are the keepers of their culture, their language and their wisdom. In fact, it has been noted that in Aboriginal communities women are the glue that holds communities together.

Once again, the conference was a huge success. It brought together women who shared their culture, their language and beliefs with each other and not only celebrated their commonalities but their differences as well.

These conferences have provided Aboriginal women with an opportunity to connect in a supportive way and to share, discover and honour their strength. These conferences have become a platform so that Aboriginal women's diverse voices can be heard and filtered into the Provincial Government.

Conference Proceedings

Day One

The conference began with a traditional opening ceremony of a Smudging. This smudging was completed by Tammy Drew who is a member of the Miawpukek First Nation.

Judy White, Conference Facilitator, provided a welcome to all of the delegates, with special recognition to the Elders in the room. Judy went on to provide an overview of the conference agenda and proceedings.

Historical Overview of Aboriginal Women

The first agenda item was a Historical Overview of Aboriginal Women (Appendix C).

To set the tone of the conference, Judy described the journey Aboriginal women have taken to get where they are today. This presentation outlined the importance of women to Aboriginal culture and how they are central figures in most Aboriginal legends.
Judy pointed out that colonization and culture are strongly linked as the imposition of the colonizers beliefs and values deeply impacted culture.

Judy indicated that Aboriginal women are doubly disadvantaged in Canadian society because of their race and gender. She went on to explain that assimilation of Indian People involved the outlawing of traditional social systems, values and spiritual beliefs. The undermining of beliefs and ceremonies meant that Aboriginal people could not practice many of the healing methods that had been so important to their well-being. In fact, being Indian was often times illegal, frowned upon and something to be ashamed of.

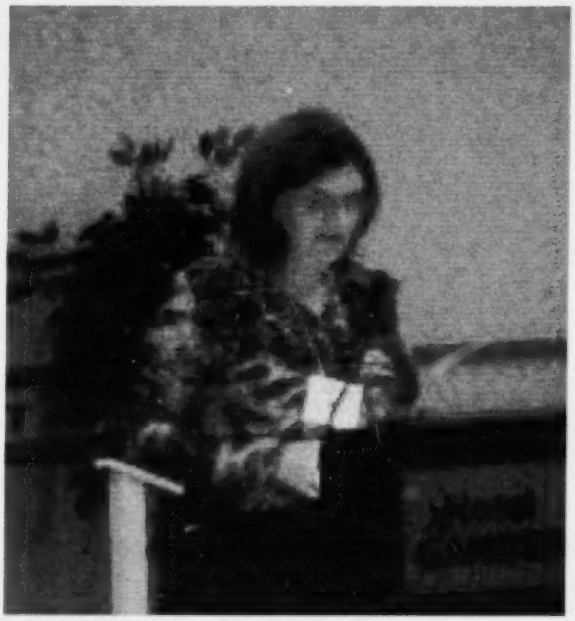
It was further reported that government policies interfered with the structure and health of family relationships.

Finally, Judy indicated that in order to reverse these realities, federal, provincial and Aboriginal governments need to support strategies that enable Aboriginal women to become re-empowered.

Next Luanne Leamon was called to give a presentation on Policy Development in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Policy Making Overview

Luanne Leamon, on behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador provided a presentation explaining how the current government develops policy (Appendix D).



Luanne explained that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is governed by its Constitution and has three branches of government:

- Legislative
- Executive
- Judicial

Luanne reported that within government there are different levels of authority for policy-making and most major policy decisions are made by Cabinet.

Luanne indicated that individual departments are responsible for researching policy proposals, seeking input from stakeholders, and drafting Cabinet papers recommending several courses of action and the merits of the different options.

It was further explained that these policy papers are used to not only assist Cabinet on how to proceed, but to review any legislative or regulatory considerations, the implications for other departments or governments, impact, if any, on the environment, results of consultations or stakeholder input as well as how the policy will be communicated.

In addition, Luanne explained that government is committed to analyzing policies for thier impact on Labrador and Aboriginal populations, rural Newfoundland populations, and women. Other groups may be added in the future. This is used to help government appreciate and account for potential differences in the impacts of government policy.

Finally, Luanne pointed out that government is committed to making its processes more transparent and input and feedback from citizens is part of the policy development process. Most importantly, policy is best when everyone is involved.

Next, Judy explained that many Aboriginal Women are already doing great work in policy development in their respective governments, communities and organizations. Participants were provided with an opportunity to hear from delegates who have had experience in development of Aboriginal policy.

Miawpukek First Nation

Tammy Drew, on behalf of Miawpukek First Nation (MFN) provided an overview (Appendix E) of how policy is implemented in her community.

Tammy pointed that the MFN has grown tremendously over the past 20-30 years in development and structure. She pointed out that community involvement is at the heart of the government.

Tammy explained that the Band Council has been involved in various strategic planning sessions and recent work has stemmed from those sessions.

Additionally, Tammy reported that polices within MFN can develop from anywhere in the organization's hierarchy. Once it is identified, the issue then goes to the Senior Management Committee, who conducts the research and drafting of the policy. The policy is then sent to Chief and Council for the first reading.

After Chief and Council have looked at it, the policy goes directly to the community for consultation.

MFN uses a variety of tools for it consultation such as door to door surveys, community sessions, information sessions and even takes individual written and/or verbal feedback into consideration.

The policy then incorporates and considers changes and suggestions from the community and is then sent to the Legal Department for analysis. When all this is completed, Tammy explained that the second reading is conducted by Chief and Council and is approved by them as well. The policy is then implemented globally.

Tammy pointed out that all their policies are looked at as communal as opposed to gender specific. It is what works for the "Whole".

Tammy explained that information flow to the community is very important and is done in a variety of mechanisms such as: Assembly Reports, Portfolio Reports, Monthly Reports, Newsletters, Chief and Council minutes, Special Mailing and Access to Information Policy.

Tammy reported that there are important factors that MFN believes contribute to the success of their government.

- Government's Accountability/Transparency
- Government's Flexibility. (If a policy does not work it is not carved in stone)
- Strategic Planning
- Team Work
- Allowing people to be themselves

Next on the agenda, Stella Saunders was invited to do a presentation on the Natuashish Government.

Natuashish

Stella Saunders provided an overview of a policy that Natuashish Government has recently implemented through a by-law.

Stella explained that "dry reserve status" is a by-law that has been implemented in her community for over a year now.

She explained to get the by-law passed a lot of work was completed by its leaders and it is still a controversial issue today.

Stella indicated that the first talk of "dry" reserve started in Davis Inlet. As the community moved to Natuashish, leaders continued to examine how to make the community alcohol-free.

Stella explained that the leaders took action and began the move towards holding a vote. Before the vote was held, a lot of work was done within the community such as:

- several community meetings and information sessions
- presentations on various reports that examined the population statistics related to suicide, violence and crime
- reports sent to every household

Although the by-law was passed and the policy is implemented, there are still challenges, Stella explained. The narrow support for the ban — 76 in favour to 74 opposed — reflects how torn people were over the proposal.

As well, Stella acknowledged that although alcohol consumption has not completely stopped in the community, the by-law has created a safer and more positive community.

Stella also pointed out that it is important to look at how the implementation of policy or by-law will affect the community as the whole. Stella reported that the community had to be quick to offer programs and services to stabilize the community and its people.

Melita Paul presented next on behalf of the Labrador Metis Nation.

Labrador Metis Nation

The Labrador Metis Nation (LMN) was represented by Melita Paul who provided an overview. Melita explained that the LMN has made great strides since the beginning of organization in 1980.

Melita stated that since that time there have been many obstacles and challenges as the LMN are not as developed in certain policy areas as they would like to be.

However, Melita explained that the Labrador Metis Nation developed a Constitution under the NL Companies Act and has been operating effectively under this rule of law since 1986.

Melita indicated that each article in the Constitution was presented and discussed at community meetings and ratified at an Annual General Assembly.

Any changes to the Constitution must be presented in the form of a resolution at an Annual General Assembly and supported by ¾ majority of the assembly.

It was pointed out by Melita that the policies dealt with by the organization are mainly ones of governance.

Some examples of policies governing the LMN include:
- Composition and Powers of the Executive and Council
- Elections & Voting
- Meetings

Melita explained that if a resolution is needed, it is drafted by members and submitted prior to the community meetings.

These resolutions are voted on by its members in each community and at the Annual Assembly. It was pointed out that the guideline for voting is designed by the universal suffrage which is the extension of the right to vote to all adults, without racial, sexual, spiritual, moral, intellectual, economic or social distinction.

Melita further reported that all staff are governed by the Constitution and a Policies and Procedures Manual under the direction of Council. She also pointed out that changes can be made to those guidelines by majority of Council.

The next speaker was Bobbi Boland.

Blinkers, Blinders and Baggage: Gender Analysis and FASD

A presentation (Appendix F) was provided by Bobbi Boland who outlined the process of connecting the dots between gender and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

Bobbi explained that Gender Analysis is based on belief that gender bias is an important factor to consider when we create programs, policies and legislation.

All laws, policies and programs must take account of the realities of women's lives, their needs, and priorities to ensure they are effective, durable and fair.

Gender analysis is needed to ensure women are equally valued and their life choices are not limited because of gender, ethnicity, social position or non-relevant characteristics

Bobbi's presentation outlined that our gender alone dictates differences. It is demonstrated that girls and boys are not the same.

In fact, Bobbi explained that research consistently finds that boys gain confidence and self esteem in adolescence and girls experience a dramatic decline during adolescence.

Bobbi reported that substance use is often a way women self medicate and cope with mental illness, violence, trauma, chronic pain, stress and anxiety – all connected to victimization.

Bobbi explained that a case study was completed and of the 80 women who gave birth to babies with FASD the statistics were astounding:

- 100% had been seriously abused
- 90% suffered from depression and phobias
- 90% suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- 80% lived with partners who did not want them to stop using

It was explained that little effort has been made to understand women's substance abuse during pregnancy. Research and policy tend not to focus on the health and welfare of women but on the dangers posed to children, families and society.

Bobbi pointed out that this is very problematic. It is a known fact that women are NOT drinking to hurt their babies, yet our current polices and program are very child-focused and that sometimes takes away from the mother.

Bobbi discussed that women's responsibilities are often barriers to accessing treatment and women experience resistance and negative consequences attached to entering treatment programs.

Bobbi indicated that gender responsive programs consider needs of women in all aspects.

We know what works best for women in terms of treatment program is the following: flexible philosophy, friendly staff, few rules, individual counselling, women-only space, home visiting, and childcare.

As well a gender analysis must be placed on treatment approaches that:

- follow theories of women's psychological development
- recognize the role relationships and connection to others play in women's sense of self
- recognize the importance of using counselling methods that empower and strengthen women
- recognize women's experience of trauma.

The next speaker was Celeste McKay.

Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis

Celeste McKay was commissioned by the province to report on Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis (CRGBA).

Celeste started her presentation (Appendix G) by pointing out that there is another layer of gender basis analysis (GBA). It is that a GBA isn't enough in the

context of Aboriginal women's lives. We need to take into consideration the unique and diverse experiences of Metis, Inuit and First Nations women.

Celeste stated that for Aboriginal women, their experiences are affected by their race and their gender and how these and many other characteristics affect their experiences and shape their daily lives.

Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis needs to be used by policy-makers, decision-makers, practitioners, legislators and governments.

Celeste reported that the goal of a CRGBA tool is to ensure the voices of Aboriginal women are heard. As well, to ensure that the continuing impacts of historical inequalities relevant to Aboriginal women in Canada are acknowledged and addressed in current policy development and implementation.

It was discussed by Celeste that this development of the CRGBA stems from recommendation #20 from the first National Aboriginal Women's Summit that took place here in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2007 that states: "implementing a culturally relevant gender based analysis framework in all legislative, policy and programming at all government levels will provide critical insight into the current situation forcing outcomes to be more holistic and inclusive".

Celeste reported that a CRGBA must be present throughout all steps of policy-making from defining the outcomes and goals to consultation. Furthermore it must include developing and analyzing policy options and making recommendations.

After Celeste's presentation the attendees were organized and divided into group to review a series of questions.

The questions were as follows:

1. **What Does Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis mean to you?**
2. **What do you like about it? Why?**
3. **What don't you like about it? Why?**
4. **What needs to happen in your community for this to work?**

5. **Would it be a good idea for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to do a CRCBA?**

After the groups were finished answering these questions, they gathered back as a group to officially close the first day activities. The session was concluded with a closing prayer by Labrador Metis Nation Elder, Florence Oliver.

Community Feast / Banquet

Conference delegates and invited guests attended a Community Feast/Banquet and traditional giveaway ceremony. The Honourable Patty Pottle, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, was the keynote speaker and delivered remarks of behalf of the Provincial Government (Appendix H).

Minister Pottle highlighted the fact that what Aboriginal women are achieving in this province is gaining notice across the country.

She stated Newfoundland and Labrador is recognized as a leader in addressing the needs of Aboriginal women. Minister Pottle explains the topic of this conference, "Aboriginal Women and Policy Development" stems from one of the recommendations from previous conferences and clearly points out the needs of Aboriginal women should be better incorporated into government programs and policies.

Minister Pottle stated that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to Aboriginal women, understanding their issues and needs, and recognizing their collective voice is important in the decision-making process that determines policy.

The Minister recognized this has not always been the case for Aboriginal women, or women in general. She stated that the work being completed through these conferences is helping to change and address these issues.

This session was closed by the NAWS Womens Group performance and a traditional giveaway ceremony.

Day Two

The second day of the conference was opened by Inuit Women who performed the Lighting of the Inuit Candle. These women also performed a number of songs in their language.

Judy White, Conference Facilitator, provided a recap of the first day proceedings and the Community Feast & Banquet. Judy and Celeste then invited the groups to come forward to provide feedback from their respective breakout group sessions.

Group # 1 – Miawpukek First Nation

1. **What Does Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis mean to you?**

- That when doing analysis we must consider all gender and cultural sensitivities
- All genders must be considered, even transgendered
- Looking at the parts of the whole... would create looking at the whole picture

2. **What do you like about it? Why?**

- Highlights issues you may not be aware of prior to doing the analysis
- The fact that it is going to give all areas of societies a voice
- Both men and women have an equal voice
- Enable focus to be directed to the areas of need
- It equalizes men and women without comparing strengths and weaknesses

3. **What don't you like about it? Why?**

- Sometimes depending on a proposal deadlines you may have the time to do a full CRBGA
- Lots of times you do not have the resources to do this in your own organizations

4. **What needs to happen in your community for this to work?**

- Need education and training around this concept and how to use it in community programming
- We realized after much discussion we are already doing some of this already. For example, our bereavement policy for miscarriages now covers the dad as well as the mom. This was change after the need was identified

5. **Would it be a good idea for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to do a CRCBA?**

- Yes they need to look at ALL their programs, identify gaps and move to improve these gaps.

Group # 2 – Labrador Metis Nation

1. **What Does Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis mean to you?**

- Consult with all interest groups during policy development
- From an Aboriginal perspective it means providing meaningful feedback to policy makers
- Cultural orientation needs to be provided to the various professionals (i.e. teachers, health professionals)
- Acknowledge inequality
- Total inclusion of ALL communities
- Government acceptance and recognition of the LMN

2. What do you like about it? Why?

- Gives us a voice
- It is culturally relevant
- It acknowledges differences
- Networking opportunities between Aboriginal Groups and the Province
- Recognition by Government that we HAVE A VOICE
- Equal opportunity to be heard
- Value of elders and traditional teachings in this process

3. What don't you like about it? Why?

- It is a SLOW process
- Where is it going
- Is outcomes going to be shown
- Will it be a reflection of our input and not twisted
- Uncertainty of the interpretation
- Will this actually be used in policy development

4. What needs to happen in your community for this to work?

- Honour the duty to consult
- Communication between the LMN Communities and Government
- Liaison person between LMN & Government
- Consultation in our communities by LMN & Government
- A better understanding of what the CGBRA is and how to develop and implement it into programs and services

5. Would it be a good idea for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to do a CRCBA?

- It HAS to Happen

- It order for us to voice a voice this needs to be applied to Government policies
- It should be applied across all policies ASAP(Housing, education Roads)

Group # 3 – Friendship Centers

1. **What Does Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis mean to you?**

   - You include culture in policy making
   - Respect other culture differences

2. **What do you like about it? Why?**

   - Treating all cultures equally while respecting differences

3. **What don't you like about it? Why?**

   - Inequalities that may result is using culture as an out
   - People may place blame on culture to change result (i.e. abusing the justice system)

4. **What needs to happen in your community for this to work?**

   - Aboriginal Women need to be more involved in decisions that are going to affect them

5. **Would it be a good idea for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to do a CRCBA?**

   - Yes as a transparent process not just "say" they are doing it!!!

Group # 4 – Innu

1. **What Does Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis mean to you?**

   - Gives Innu women a voice
   - Council has to have women – this always was not the case
   - Respect our differences
   - Innu traditions, culture, values, goals, customs, food, spirituality is unique
   - It is this time that "History has finally turned to "HERstory"

2. **What do you like about it? Why?**

   - Points out that there are differences in culture...we are all unique
   - Culture is include in workshops
   - It is culturally driven, it came from us....we told them (the Government) that this is what we wanted
   - We have to bring back and apply to our own community

3. **What don't you like about it? Why?**

   - IF CRGBA does not have Innu input it will be bias
   - Innu communities are different that other aboriginal communities

4. **What needs to happen in your community for this to work?**

   - Community meetings need to be held
   - The Lower Churchill deal- Labrador has the Historic Sites-there are cultural graves there!
   - Everyone has to understand that this is culturally significant
   - There has to be consensus

5. **Would it be a good idea for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to do a CRCBA?**

   - Yes
   - When using this then province then understands us better
   - They will be better equipped to respond to our wants and needs as a community

Group # 5 – NAWS & FNI

1. **What Does Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis mean to you?**

   - Allows us to be recognized
   - Recognizes inequality
   - Useful Tool
   - Creates Balance
   - Being able to have a voice that is being heard
   - Count in decision making
   - If used properly it will be a voice that the Aboriginal women can use in policy making within our communities as it pertains to decision that affects us on some many levels

2. **What do you like about it? Why?**

   - Government acceptance for us to instill our culture and heritage in others which leads to acceptance for everyone
   - Once government accepts it can become a policy
   - It empowers me
   - Recognizes for Aboriginal people in particular, that culture is RELEVANT
   - Gives me hope that it will be different this time

3. **What don't you like about it? Why?**

   - The fact that it took so long to get to here
   - It is just another gimmick
   - Can something be misinterpreted?
   - Once again I have to be analyzed!

4. **What needs to happen in your community for this to work?**

   - Cooperation & Communication
   - There needs to be interest
   - Consultation with Communities
   - Understanding of what it is
   - Prepare people for it
   - Educate the youth and make them aware
   - Have a Plan for your community
   - Be proud of your culture

5. **Would it be a good idea for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to do a CRCBA?**

   - Yes! Yes! Yes!
   - We need to be included in the process
   - Reach Everyone
   - We are the people who have the knowledge & wisdom

Group # 6 – Inuit

1. **What Does Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis mean to you?**

   - Taking into account your culture
   - Taking an issue and applying the fact that I am an Inuk women and what that issue means to me because of this
   - Being Aboriginal
   - How this will affect me as an Inuit
   - How it will affect generations to come
   - It make you proud of who you are
   - Not forgetting where you came from
   - The Inuktitut Language is preserves as the language is one of the most important things about culture

2. **What do you like about it? Why?**

   - Takes the personal into account
   - Consulting with us is showing us respect
   - We do not lose our own traditions and culture that they do not get lost in all the rules and regulations
   - Make Law makers think about how this will affect others
   - The NG needs to be reminded that the Inuktitut language needs to be used in schools

3. **What don't you like about it? Why?**

   - The title is too long
   - You have to stop and think about it
   - Lots of women do not have the education to understand what this means
   - Remember each culture is different, one size does not fit all

4. **What needs to happen in your community for this to work?**

   - Accessible
   - Structured so it is not too confusing
   - Done by our own people
   - Done in the Community
   - Communication between communities
   - Involvement in our own government decision making structure
   - Start educating our youth

5. **Would it be a good idea for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to do a CRCBA?**

   - Yes if it is done right
   - Documents need to be translated
   - Materials need to be in video formats for those that want it
   - Focus groups need to be held
   - Consultation with NG
   - Consultation with Regional Associations

Next Steps & Wrap

Judy provided a recap of the Conference proceedings and explained that a report would be developed outlining the feedback from the conference. This report would be then passed on to Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the working group.

Judy also indicated that the report would also be available online on the Women's Policy Office website.

Judy thanked everyone for their participation and extended safe travels to all.

Monique Rich, an Elder from the Innu Nation, closed the session with a Prayer.

Appendix A - Agenda

Aboriginal Women – Policy Development"

AGENDA
March 3rd – 4th, 2009

A. Tuesday March 3rd, 2009

8:30 – 9 am	Registration – Hotel Gander
9:00am – 9:30am	Opening Ceremony – (Mi'kmaq -Tammy Drew) Personal Introductions Exercise – Judy White
9:45am – 10:00am	Welcome Overview of the Conference Agenda Historical Overview of Aboriginal Women – Judy White
10:00am – 10:20am	Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Policy Making Overview– Presenter (Luanne Leamon)
10:20am – 10:30am	Break
10:30am -10:50	Aboriginal Policy Making Overview (MFN – Tammy A. Drew)
10:50am – 11:10am	Aboriginal Policy Making Overview (Natuashish – Stella Saunders)
11:10am- 11:30am	Aboriginal Policy Making Overview (LMN – Melita Paul)
11:30am- 12:00am	Question & Answer Period
12:00pm – 1:15pm	Lunch– (To be provided on site)

B. Afternoon Sessions

1:15pm – 2:15pm	*"Blinkers, Blinders, and Baggage: Really obvious things gender analysis tells us about effective FASD prevention and some other related issues".* – Bobbi Boland

2:15pm – 2:30pm	Break
2:30pm – 3:15pm	"Culturally Relevant Gender Base Analysis" – Celeste McKay
3:15pm – 4:45pm	Small group discussions
4:45pm – 5:00pm	Closing Prayer (LMN- Elder Florence Oliver)

C. March 3rd / 09 - Community Feast / Banquet – Emcee – Judy A. White

6:30pm	Opening Comments Grace Traditional Feast Guest Speaker – Minister Patty Pottle NAWN Performers Give Away Ceremony Closing Song

Wednesday, March 4th , 2009

9:00am – 9:05am	Opening Ceremonies (Nunatsiavut – Elder Annie Evans)
9:05am – 9:10am	Recap of first day – Judy A. White and Celeste McKay
9:15am – 10:15am	Small Groups Report Back
10:15am – 10:30am	Break
10:30am – 11:45am	Next Steps & Wrap Up
11:45pm – 12:00	Closing Prayer (Innu Nation)
	Lunch
1pm	(Depart for home)

Appendix B – Steering Committee

Steering Committee

Charlotte Wolfrey	Nunatauavut Government
Katie Rich	Mushuau Innu First Nation Representative
Tammy Drew	Miawpukek First Nation
Melita Paul	Labrador Metis Nation
Chief Laetitia MacDonald	Federation of Newfoundland Indians
Sheila Robinson	Newfoundland Aboriginal Women Network
Karen Miller	St. John's Native Friendship Centre
Patricia Fleming	Labrador Friendship Centre

Appendix C – Historical Overview

4th Annual Provincial Aboriginal
Women's Conference
March 3rd, 2009

Aboriginal Women Presentation

Introduction

- Aboriginal Canadians have a long history of resilience, and a strong spirit of survival to draw from and Aboriginal Women are the core of our survival.
- Women played a prominent part in the political and cultural life of many traditional Aboriginal societies.
- First and foremost, they were honoured as the givers of life. Their ability to bear, raise and nurture the new generation was seen as a special gift from the Creator, a source of awesome power and equal responsibility.

Overview

- In Aboriginal teachings, passed on through the oral histories of the Aboriginal people of this province from generation to generation, Aboriginal men and women were equal in power and each had autonomy within their personal lives.
- Women figured centrally in almost all Aboriginal creation legends.
- Women were never considered inferior in Aboriginal society until Europeans arrived.

Aboriginal Women and Men

- Marie Wilson of the Gitksan Wet'suwet'en Tribal Council helps me here. She has compared the relationship between women and men to the eagle. An eagle soars to unbelievable heights and has tremendous power on two equal wings--one female, one male--carrying the body of life between them. Women and men are balanced parts of the whole, yet they are very different from each other and are not "equal" if equality is defined as being the same. Marie Wilson's metaphor of equality is the contribution of both wings to the flight. "Equality" in an Indian sense is understood according to a different set of values.

The Changing Image of Aboriginal Women

- The demeaning image of Aboriginal women is rampant in North American culture.
- Racist and sexist stereotypes not only hurt Aboriginal women and their sense of self-esteem, but actually encourage abuse—both by Aboriginal men and by others.
- With the coming of colonial powers, a disturbing mind-set crept into their own societies. Policies and laws imposed by foreign governments ruptured cultural traditions and introduced discrimination against women.

What is Colonization?

- "the conquest and control of other people's land and goods."
- This process is one which involves: Physical invasion of another's land, the destruction of pre-existing Social and cultural structures,
- An assumption of political and economic control,
- The establishment of social relations based on racial inferiority,
- And weakening of resistance to allow control of society

Linking Colonization and Culture

- The imposition of the colonizers beliefs and values deeply affected our cultures.
- Although many of these effects have been destructive, the strength of Aboriginal People must not be underestimated.

Aboriginal women are doubly disadvantaged in Canadian society because of their race and gender.

One of the most profound impacts of colonization has been a denial of our traditional economic structures, loss of our land base, and traditional governing structures.

Colonization

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ABORIGINAL HEALTH

- When the first group of immigrants landed on the shores of North America suffering from malnutrition and disease, Aboriginal people came to their aid.
- They administered remedies and provided nutritional meals that saved the lives of many Europeans. In this way, they could be characterized as the first health care workers upon the arrival of the Europeans.
- Oral histories describe Elders as commonly exceeding 100 years of age.
- Historical writings and present-day scientific research report that Aboriginal people of the time were able to control disease and enjoyed high levels of mental and physical health.

The Struggle to Maintain Nationhood

- The arrival of the Europeans brought with it much change for the inhabitants of Turtle Island (North America). In the beginning, relationships were those of general cooperation, mostly involving "ship-to-shore" trading. Aboriginal people provided skills and information for the booming fur trade.
- When the Europeans were at war, they sought out Aboriginal allies. These early relationships were relationships between governments, and were based on treaty-making processes.
- Treaties originally provided a means of establishing relationships for the purposes of alliances, peace and trade.

From Land Wealth to Poverty

- The land and all it provided was the wealth of Aboriginal Nations. Aboriginal people were able to satisfy all of their needs through it. Their way of life was directly tied to the land.
- Medicines and ceremonies used to maintain wellness came from and involved the land.
- With the growing population of non-Aboriginal people, the original agreements made with Aboriginal Nations were breached. Canadians wanted more land and more resources.
- These needs could only be satisfied by moving into territory inhabited by Indians. This often meant that previous agreements were violated. In many cases land was confiscated by theft, it was taken by unduly influencing Aboriginal governments through the use of alcohol, and sometimes bought for small amounts of money:

The Struggle to Maintain Identity

- In the 19th Century, government policy changed from government-to-government relations with Aboriginal Nations to attempts to integrate and assimilate. This change was due to a number of factors: the decline of the fur trade; an end to most of the armed conflict between the various new arrivals; and, the desire for more land and resources for the settlers.
- Assimilation became the goal of the new Dominion of Canada in their dealings with Aboriginal peoples. John A. Macdonald himself spoke of the goal 'to do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the inhabitants of the Dominion.'
- A number of pieces of legislation and government policy were created to achieve

Assimilation

- To achieve assimilation; They often involved the outlawing of traditional social systems, values and spiritual beliefs. Whether these policies were misguided humanitarianism or malicious attempts to wipe out the Indian way of life, the effects of these policies were devastating.
- The undermining of beliefs and ceremonies meant that Aboriginal people could not practice many of the healing methods that had been so important to their well-being. Being Indian was often times illegal, frowned upon, but worst of all, something to be ashamed of.
- Being part of mainstream Canadian society was something to aspire to.
- In its attempt to integrate Aboriginal people, the Government of Canada attempted to strip Indians of their self-respect. Many practices defiantly survived these laws, due to the efforts of many brave people.

The Legal Definition of Indian

- Early on, the Canadian government saw the need to limit the number of people registered as Indians. As part of the goal of assimilation, they created artificial criteria to define Indians and, therefore, entitlement to their rights as Indians.
- This is one of the most harmful aspects of the Indian Act

Strong Women

- Healthy relationships are central to the well-being of Aboriginal people. Much of this well-being came from the family.
- Government policies interfered with the structure and health of family relationships to the detriment of the individual members of that family.
- Many Aboriginal cultures tell of seven stages of life. Beginning with the infant stage, a person will pass through all of these stages learning the lessons they need to be happy and fulfilled. One of these stages is devoted to the nurturing of children. Some people experienced residential school, in the early and mid-20th Century, left families with gaps in their natural development.
- With no one to nurture, mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts and uncles, were left without a role. Children went without the love and care of families. They often returned to their communities with the scars of abuses suffered at school.

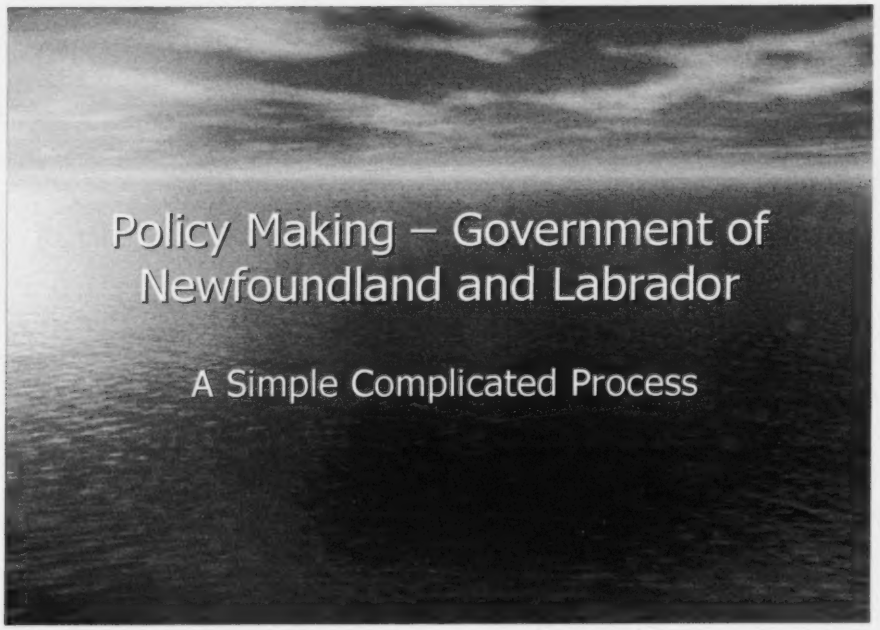
What Next!

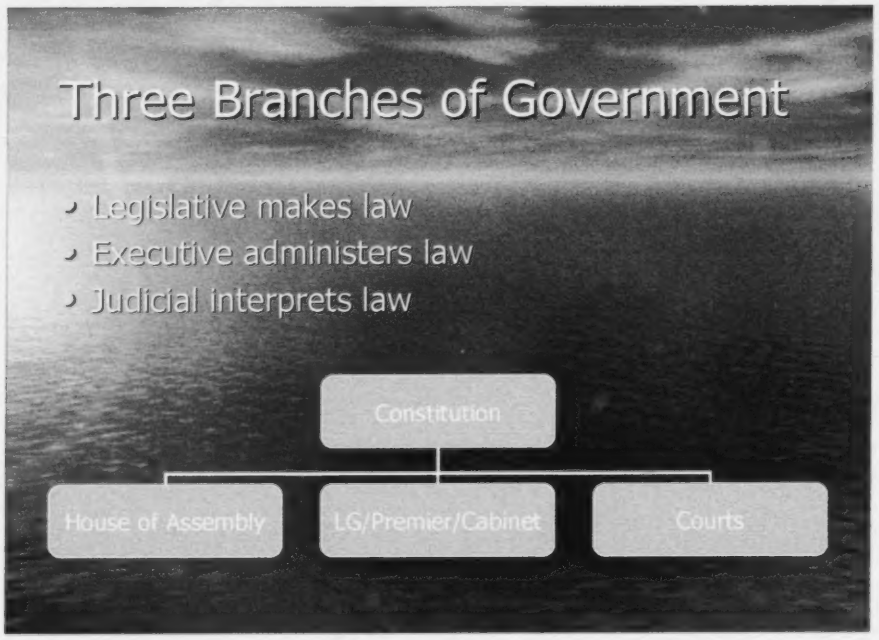
In order to reverse these realities, federal, provincial and Aboriginal governments need to support strategies that enable Aboriginal women to become re-empowered.

As we gather over the next two days, we will attend various workshops and hear several speakers who will assist us in moving forward our good life agenda.

- Cultural Relevant Gender Base Analysis

Appendix D – Policy Making
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

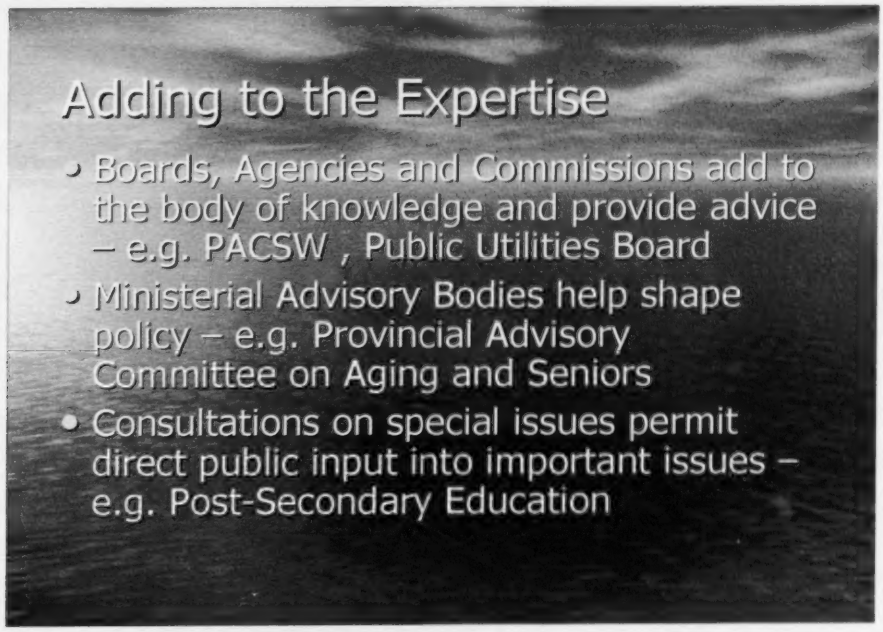

Policy Making – Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
A Simple Complicated Process

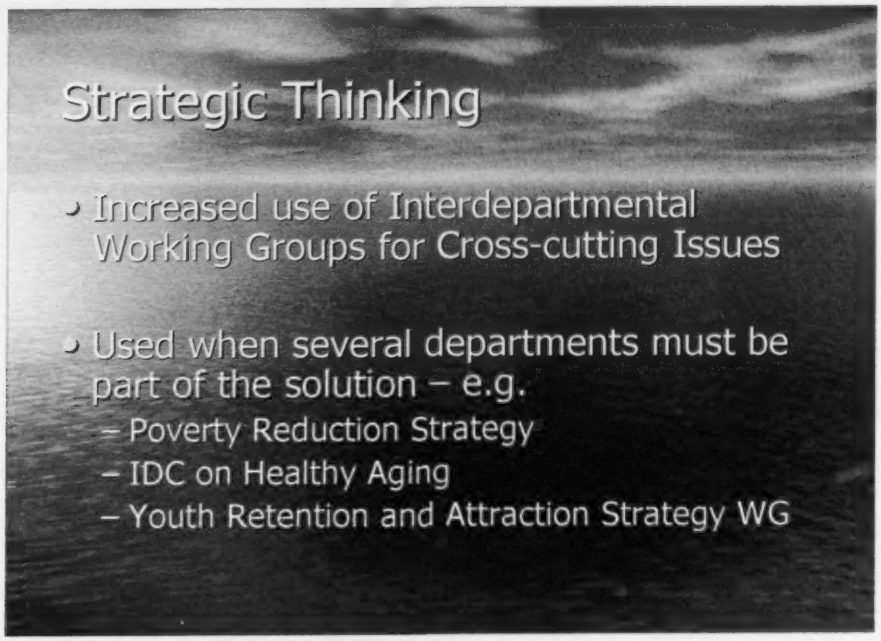

Three Branches of Government
Legislative makes law
Executive administers law
Judicial interprets law
Constitution
House of Assembly
LG/Premier/Cabinet
Courts

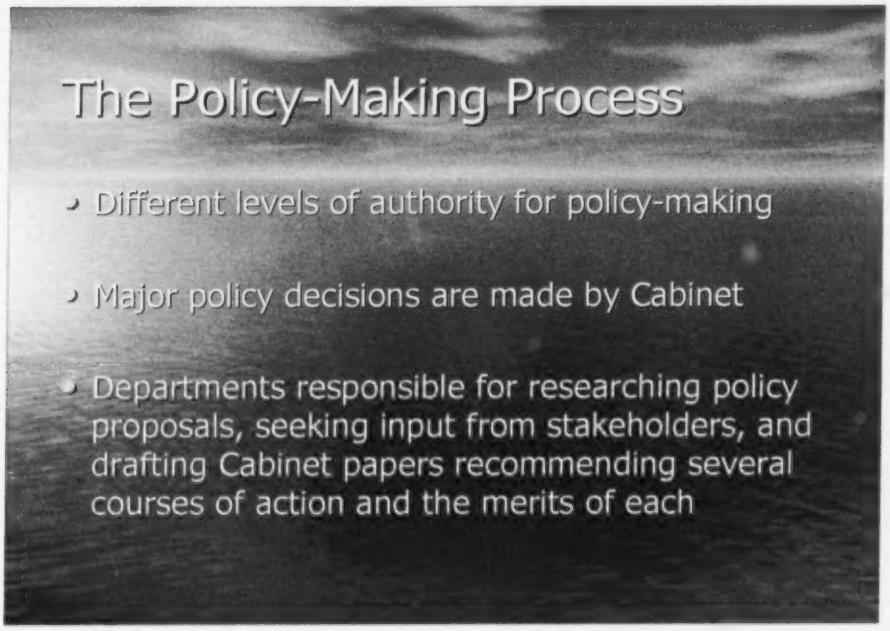
- Cabinet determines goals, policies and programs, and gives approval to Ministers to present public bills to the House of Assembly (the Legislature) for decision
- Cabinet Committees consider proposals before they go to Cabinet and can take decisions on its behalf
- There are five: Social Policy, Economic Policy, Treasury Board, Routine Matters/Appointments, and Planning and Priorities

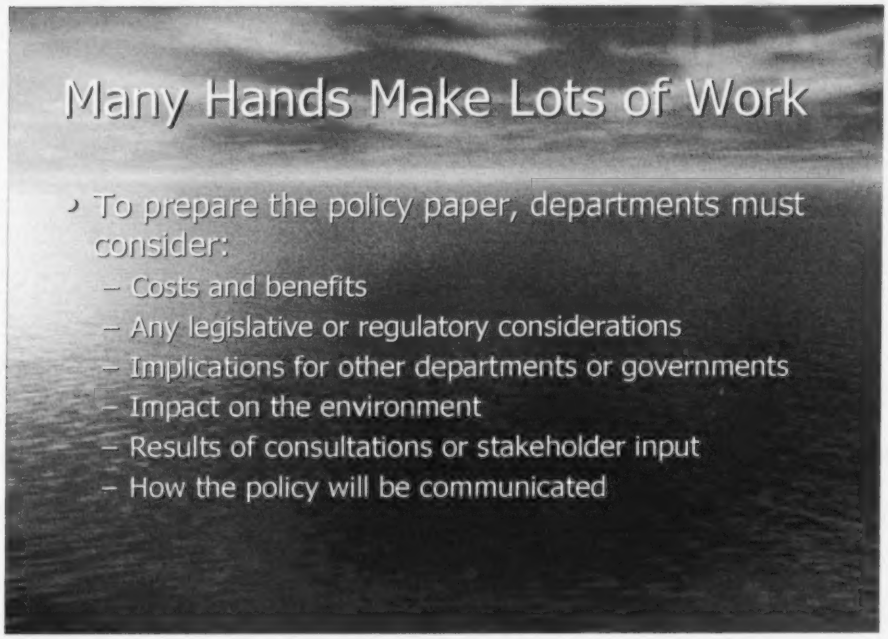
Executive Branch-Supporting Cast

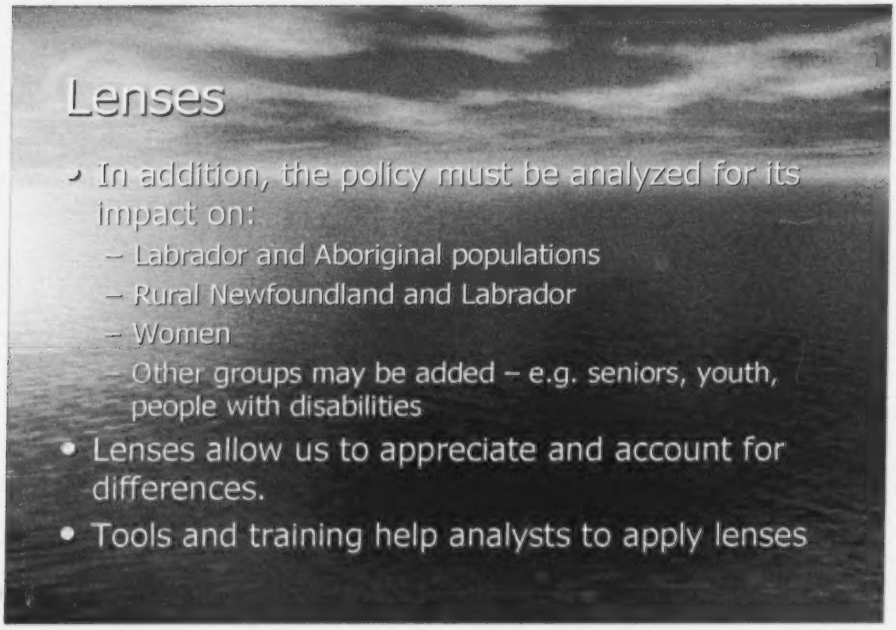
- Executive Council supports Premier and Cabinet and is responsible for overall planning, operations, and policy-making
- Includes Cabinet Secretariat, Rural Secretariat, and Women's Policy Office
- Departments headed by Cabinet Ministers provide expertise in specific areas and carry out approved legislation, policies and programs

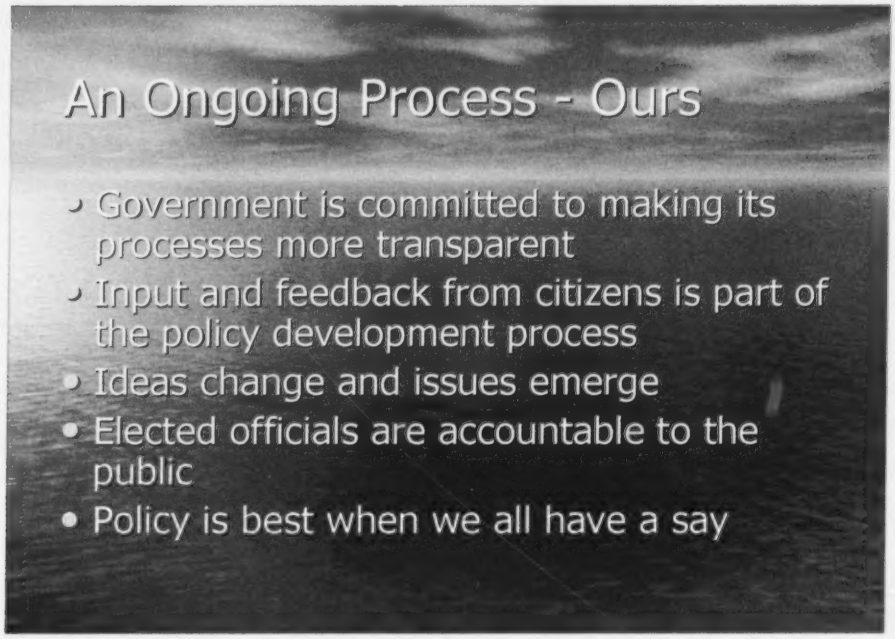

Adding to the Expertise
Boards, Agencies and Commissions add to the body of knowledge and provide advice – e.g. PACSW , Public Utilities Board
Ministerial Advisory Bodies help shape policy – e.g. Provincial Advisory Committee on Aging and Seniors
Consultations on special issues permit direct public input into important issues – e.g. Post-Secondary Education


Strategic Thinking
Increased use of Interdepartmental Working Groups for Cross-cutting Issues
Used when several departments must be part of the solution – e.g.
– Poverty Reduction Strategy
– IDC on Healthy Aging
– Youth Retention and Attraction Strategy WG


The Policy-Making Process
Different levels of authority for policy-making
Major policy decisions are made by Cabinet
Departments responsible for researching policy proposals, seeking input from stakeholders, and drafting Cabinet papers recommending several courses of action and the merits of each


Many Hands Make Lots of Work
To prepare the policy paper, departments must consider:
– Costs and benefits
– Any legislative or regulatory considerations
– Implications for other departments or governments
– Impact on the environment
– Results of consultations or stakeholder input
– How the policy will be communicated


Lenses
In addition, the policy must be analyzed for its impact on:
– Labrador and Aboriginal populations
– Rural Newfoundland and Labrador
– Women
– Other groups may be added – e.g. seniors, youth, people with disabilities
• Lenses allow us to appreciate and account for differences.
• Tools and training help analysts to apply lenses


An Ongoing Process - Ours
Government is committed to making its processes more transparent
Input and feedback from citizens is part of the policy development process
• Ideas change and issues emerge
• Elected officials are accountable to the public
• Policy is best when we all have a say

Appendix E –MFN Policy Overview

Miawpukek First Nation Government

Policy Development

BY Tammy Drew, CGA, CAFM
General Manager

Map source: http://www.mikmaq.net

THEN

AND...

NOW

The Past

- Living of the Land for survival
- No Access Road to community
- No paved roads in community
- Little Education
- Poor Housing
- No Water & Sewer
- No Electricity
- Unemployment
- Language Lost
- Poor reputation as a community

Stephen and Harriet Joe, nee Lewis

LNU - "The People"

Miawpukek - gathering together like sand in the river current.

We were migrating peoples and Miawpukek was a summer gathering place for salmon and other species.

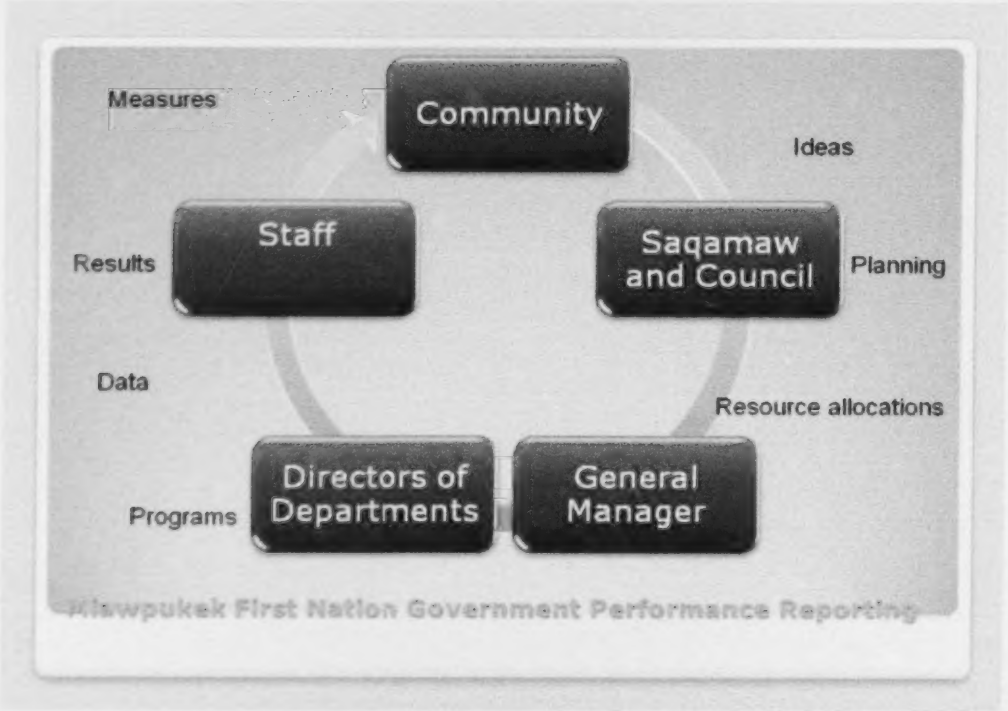
Fact: 1860 The Mi'kmaq Grand Council officially established Conne River as a community of Mikmaq Nation and Maurice Louis Chief of Newfoundland Mikmaq. We even had our own dialect of Mi'kmaq.

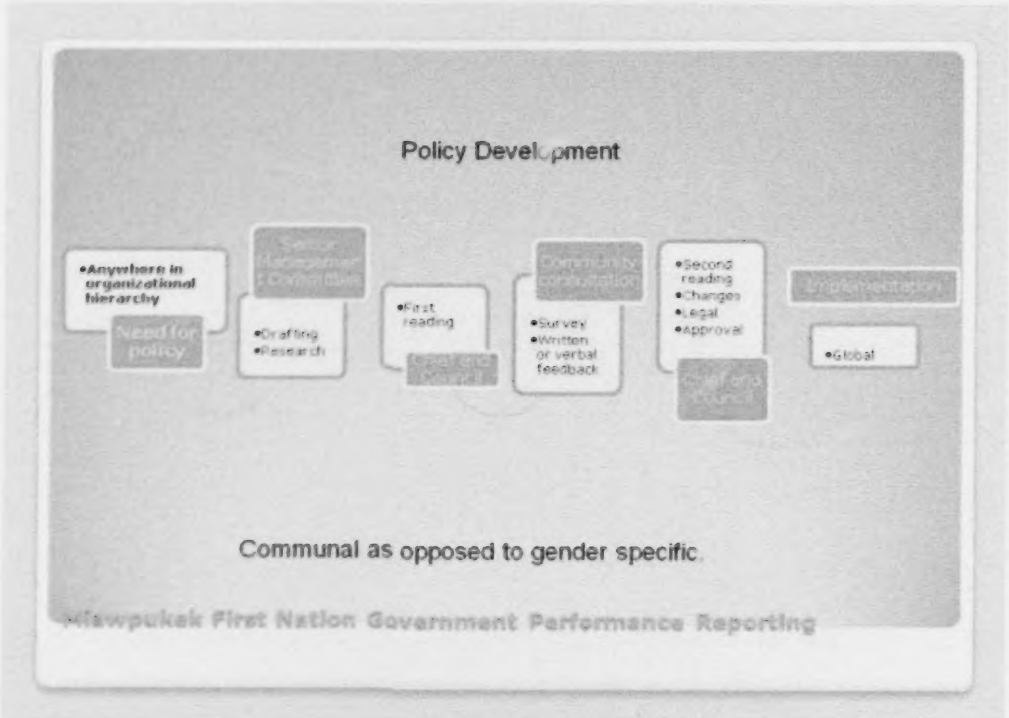
Hunger Strike - 1983

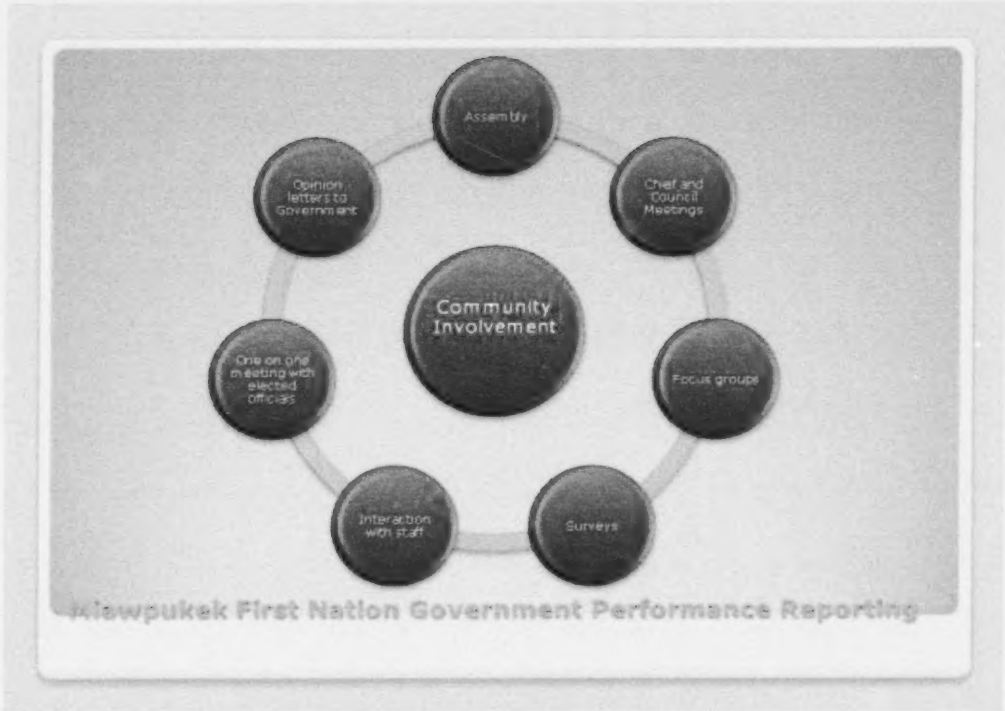
In 1983, Saqamaw Misel Joe and eight other Band members went on a hunger strike to force the government to honor the terms of the agreement they signed and release funds in the amount of $850,000 without any new conditions attached.

The Hunger Strikers: Saqamaw Misel Joe, Michael Benoit, Wilfred Drew, Ricky Jeddore, Antle Joe, Aubrey Joe, Chesley Joe, Sulia'n Joe and George Drew)

Major Turning Point for our Community

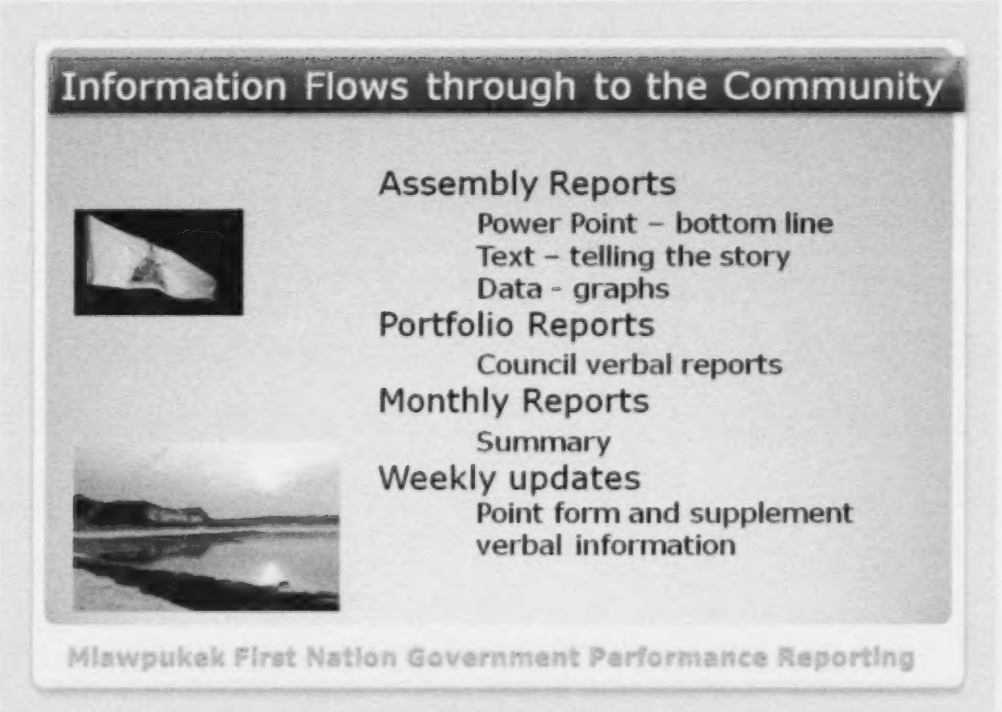

Measures
Community
Ideas
Staff
Saqamaw and Council
Results
Planning
Data
Resource allocations
Directors of Departments
General Manager
Programs
Kiawpukek First Nation Government Performance Reporting


Policy Development
•Anywhere in organizational hierarchy
Need for policy
•Drafting
•Research
•First reading
•Survey
•Written or verbal feedback
•Second reading
•Changes
•Legal
•Approval
•Global
Communal as opposed to gender specific
Kiawpukek First Nation Government Performance Reporting


Assembly
Chief and Council Meetings
Focus groups
Surveys
Interaction with staff
One on one meeting with elected officials
Opinion letters to Government
Community Involvement
Wewpukek First Nation Government Performance Reporting

Assembly
Chief and Council Meetings
Focus groups
Surveys
Senior Manage ment meeting s
Staff assemblies
Staff meetings
Monthly reports
Weekly updates
Daily reports
Directors of departments
Wewpukek First Nation Government Performance Reporting

Department
Program evaluation
Financial and performance reports to Community
Continuation or termination
Community consultation
Staff consultations
Recommendations
Regular Evaluations
Miawpukek First Nation Government Performance Reporting


Information Flows through to the Community
Assembly Reports
Power Point – bottom line
Text – telling the story
Data - graphs
Portfolio Reports
Council verbal reports
Monthly Reports
Summary
Weekly updates
Point form and supplement verbal information
Miawpukek First Nation Government Performance Reporting

Information Flows through to the Community

- Newsletters
  - Under the Umbrella
  - Individual Departments/ Affiliates
  - Bi Monthly news
- Chief and Council minutes
- Special Mailings
- Access to information Policy
  - Clarifies MFN's Open Door policy in modern realities

Miawpukek First Nation Government Performance Reporting

FACTORS IN OUR SUCCESS

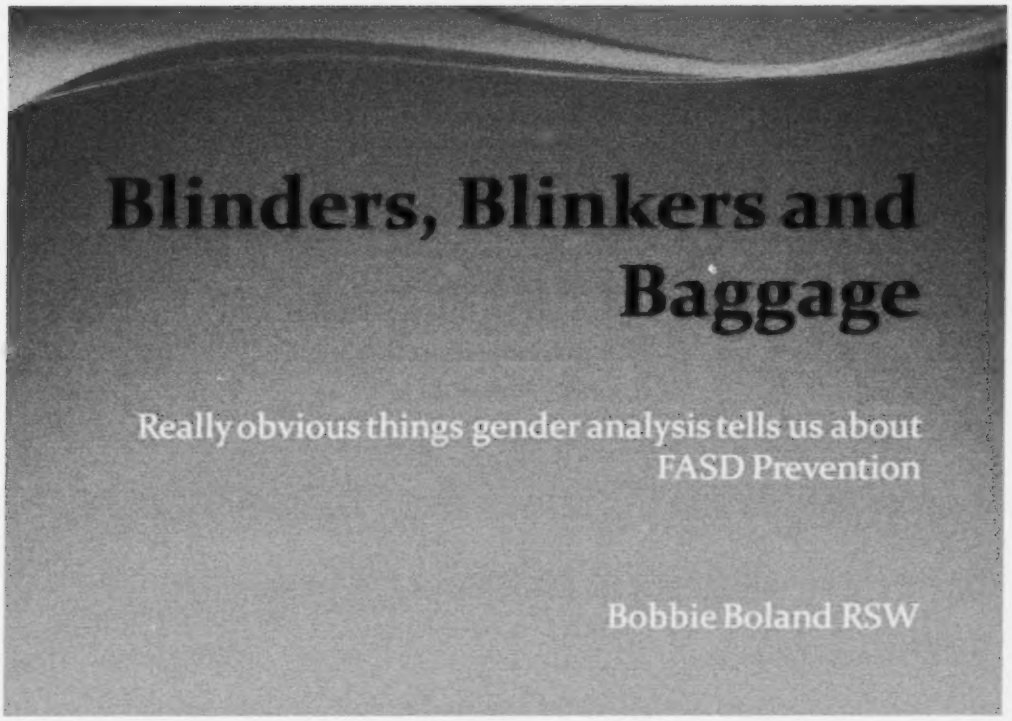
There are important factors which we believe contribute to the success of our Government.

They are:

- Government's Accountability/Transparency
- Government's Flexibility. (If a policy does not work it is not carved in stone)
- Strategic Planning
- Team Work
- Allowing People to be themselves

Miawpukek First Nation Government Performance Reporting

Appendix F - Gender Analysis and FASD


Blinders, Blinkers and Baggage
Really obvious things gender analysis tells us about FASD Prevention
Bobbie Boland RSW

Presentation Plan

- Consider messages communicated, bias and stereotypes
- What we know about women's lives:
  - social and personal, economics, violence, legislation and policy
- Closer look at Policies and Programs
- Closer look at Systems and Structures

Project History:

Women's Lives and Women's Health:
A Critical Part of FASD Prevention

Connecting the Dots: A Gender and FASD Workshop

- 2006 – Burin Peninsula Brighter Futures (BPBF) sponsored the "Strengthening the NL FASD Network" project. From that project came the "Gender Analysis of FASD; A Discussion Paper".
- 2007 – Mi'kmaq FRC in PEI sponsored the project "Women's Lives and Women's Health: A Critical Part of FASD Prevention.
- 2007 – Exploits Valley Community Coalition (EVCC) in partnership with BPBF sponsored the Connecting the Dots project

Some facts

- FASD is a reality for
  - children, families and communities
  - health, social service, education, justice systems
- A baby with FASD has a birth mother who drank alcohol while she was pregnant
- Life is not as simple as FASD is 100% preventable.

Gender Analysis

- Based on belief that gender bias is an important factor when we create programs, policies and legislation
- Laws, policies and programs must take account of the realities of women's lives, their needs, and priorities to ensure they are effective, durable and fair
- Need to ensure women are equally valued and their life choices are not limited because of gender, ethnicity, social position or non-relevant characteristics
- Illustrates impacts of determinants of health on women's lives

Gender

- Gender means the roles and expectations that are "socially constructed"
- Suggests what women can and cannot do, what their work is and the degree of control they have over their own actions
- Bias, prejudices and stereotypes based on gender leak out and can lead to discrimination and oppression.

Realities of Women's Lives

- Social and personal
  - Girls and young women
  - Family
  - Health including substance use
  - Attitudes
  - Gendered expectations
  - Pathways to substance use

Girls and Boys are not the Same

- Research consistently finds:
  - Boys gain confidence and self esteem in adolescence
  - Girls experience a dramatic decline during adolescence
- Differing moral and psychological tendencies:
  - Men think in terms of rules and justice.
  - Women are more inclined to think in terms of caring and relationships.
- Women are taught to think, act, feel, in relation to others. Relationships and connection to others play an important part of women's sense of self.

Key points in time for girls

- Difficulties intensify at the point of transition to high school
- Grades 8 - 10 identified as years when girls become disconnected from school relationships and routines
- Period of time often accompanied by increased substance use, decreased motivation
- Right supports and services may make a critical difference in the lives of girls and women and their future.

Pathways to substance use

- Substance use is often a way women self medicate and cope with mental illness, violence, trauma, chronic pain, stress and anxiety – all connected to victimization

80 Women who gave birth to babies with FASD

- 100% had been seriously abused
- 90% suffered from depression and phobias
- 90% suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- 80% lived with partners who did not want them to stop using
- Four or fewer supports in their life
- Those who received mental health treatment and had more satisfying supports achieved abstinence at a 96% higher rate.

Pregnant and Mothering Women

- Dominant focus on child
- Little focus on the mother, her health, her needs or the mother child unit
- Shame and Blame – often about things over which the woman made no personal choice

Realities of Women's Lives

Economics

Women are:

- **Better educated but earn 71 % of men's earning and are more likely to be multiple job holders**
- **Medical costs of violence against women is 1.1 billion per year – consider more than medical and it is 4.2 billion +**
- **A prevention strategy that prevents one child being born with FASD for less than 1.5 million is cost effective**

Realities of Women's Lives

Violence

- **From birth to old age women are more likely to be victims of violence at the hands of family and friends**
- **Aboriginal women are more likely to be victims of spousal violence and victims of violent crime because of societal indifference to gender and racism**
- **This reflects societal indifference to gender and racism**
- **The Highway of Tears**

Realities of Women's Lives

Legislation and Policy

- **Child centered policy often limits the rights of the mother rather than enhance health, safety and capacity to parent**
- **Research and policy focus on dangers posed to children, families and civil society in general health and welfare of women but the**
- **In July 2006 women accounted for fewer than 17% of parliamentarians world wide.**

Closer look at Policies and Programs

- **Women's responsibilities are often barriers to accessing treatment**
- **Women experience resistance and negative consequences attached to treatment entry**

We know:

- **Women only programs work best**
- **Built on theories of women's psychological development**
- **Gender responsive programs consider needs of women in all aspects.**

Closer look at Systems and Structures

- Evidence based Policy and programs:

We need:

- Child welfare policies and women's health policies to move closer together
- Women centered health care and "one stop shopping" or service hubs
- More effort to eliminate violence against women throughout the life cycle

Overview of Realities of Women's Lives

- Impact of determinants of health on Women's lives
- Women who have substance use problems
- Burden of FASD prevention unfairly rests on the women

We know what works best for women in terms of treatment programs

- Flexible philosophy
- Friendly staff
- Few rules
- Individual counselling
- Women only space
- Home visiting
- Childcare

Treatment approaches that:

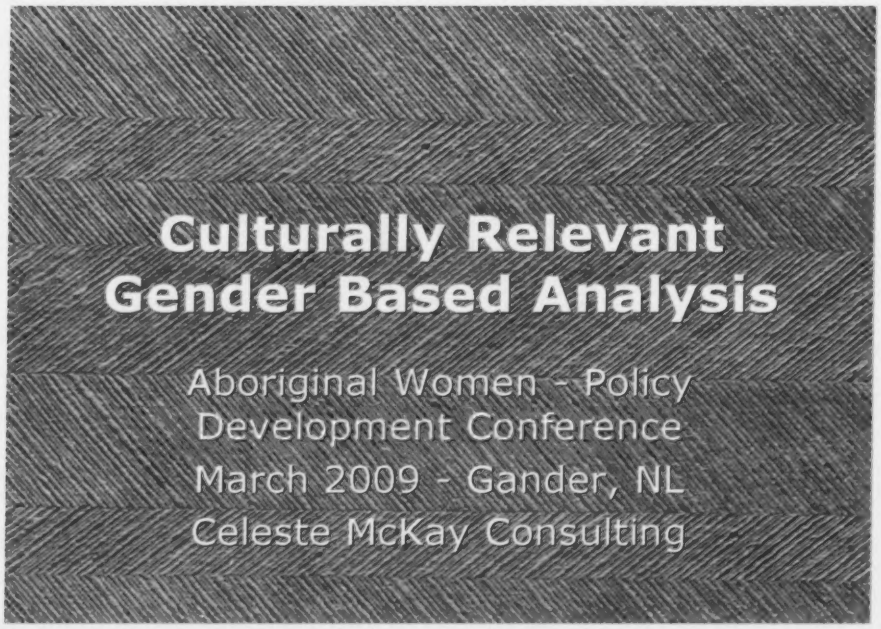
- Follow theories of women's psychological development
- Recognize the role relationships and connection to others play in women's sense of self
- Recognize the importance of using counselling methods that empower and strengthen women
- Recognize women's experience of trauma

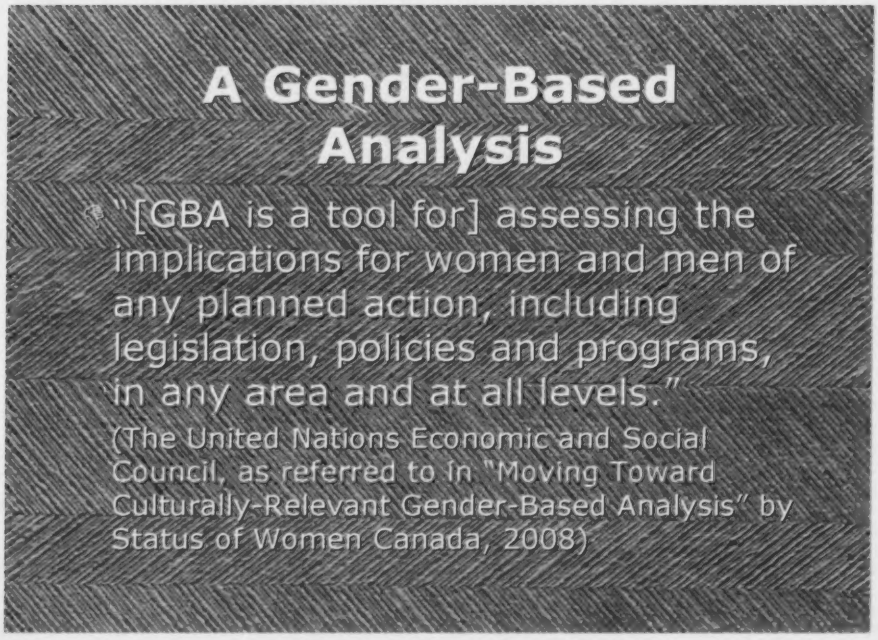
Key Messages

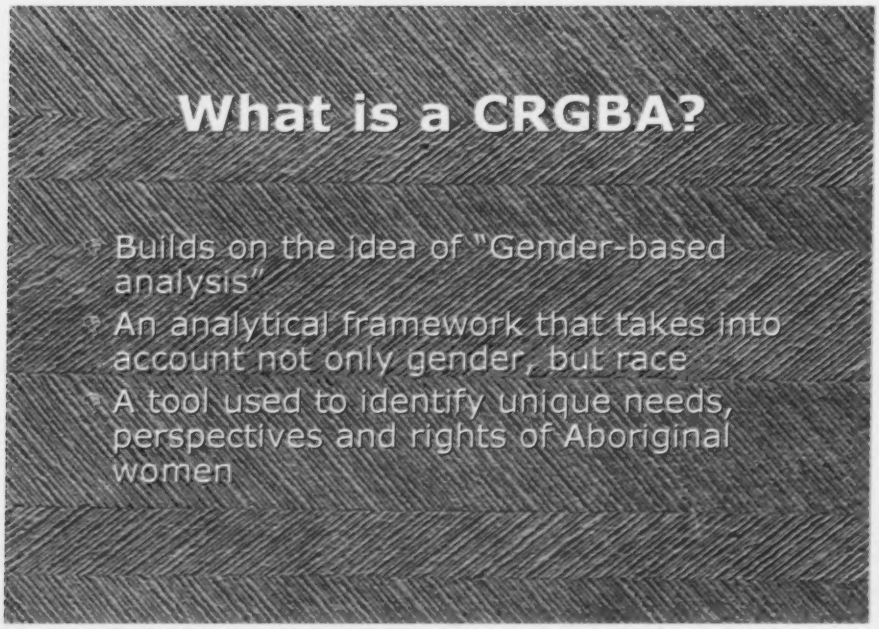
- Gender Analysis affects :
  - Priorities that direct action
  - Literature we choose to inform
  - Primary prevention messages
  - Long term strategies
  - Ownership society takes to address those affected by FASD.

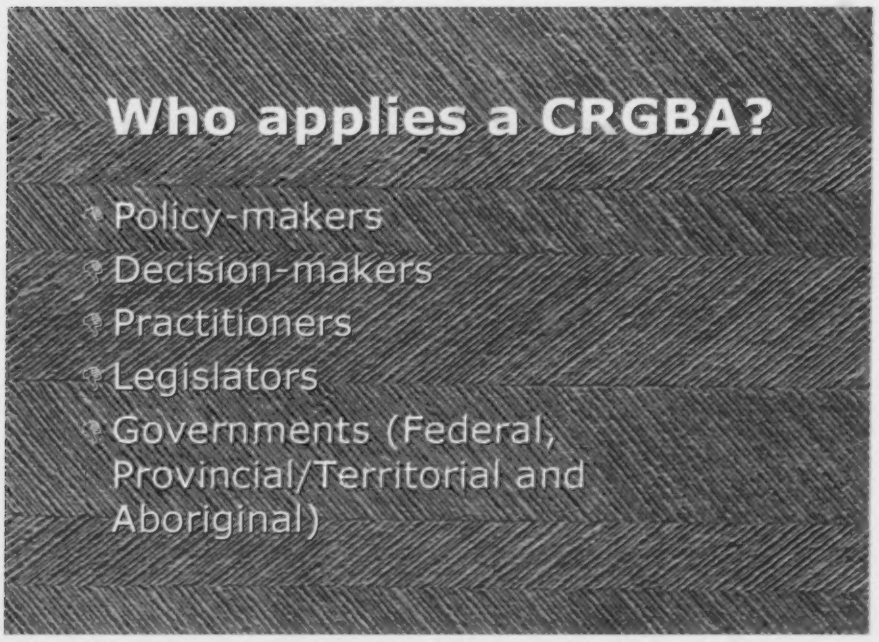
- Gender Analysis removes the blinkers, names the blinders and challenges the expectation that women carry baggage that they did not create or own.

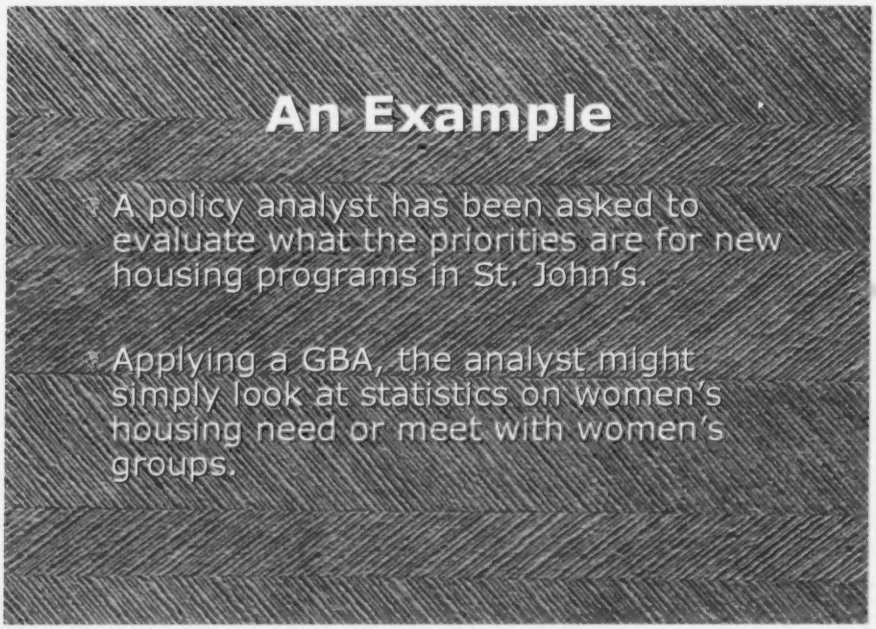
Appendix G – Culturally Relevant Gendered Based Analysis

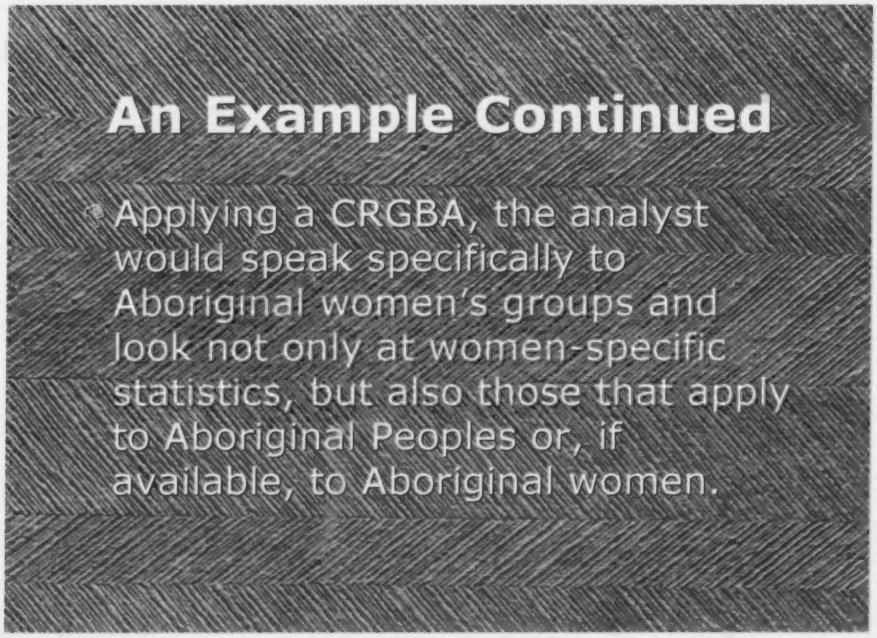

Culturally Relevant
Gender Based Analysis
Aboriginal Women - Policy
Development Conference
March 2009 - Gander, NL
Celeste McKay Consulting

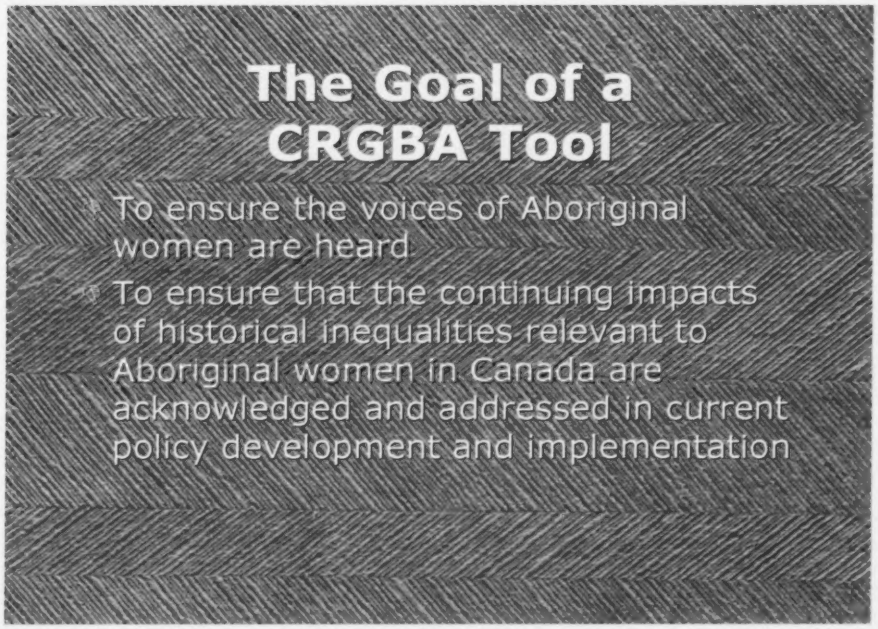

A Gender-Based
Analysis
"[GBA is a tool for] assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programs, in any area and at all levels."
(The United Nations Economic and Social Council, as referred to in "Moving Toward Culturally-Relevant Gender-Based Analysis" by Status of Women Canada, 2008)

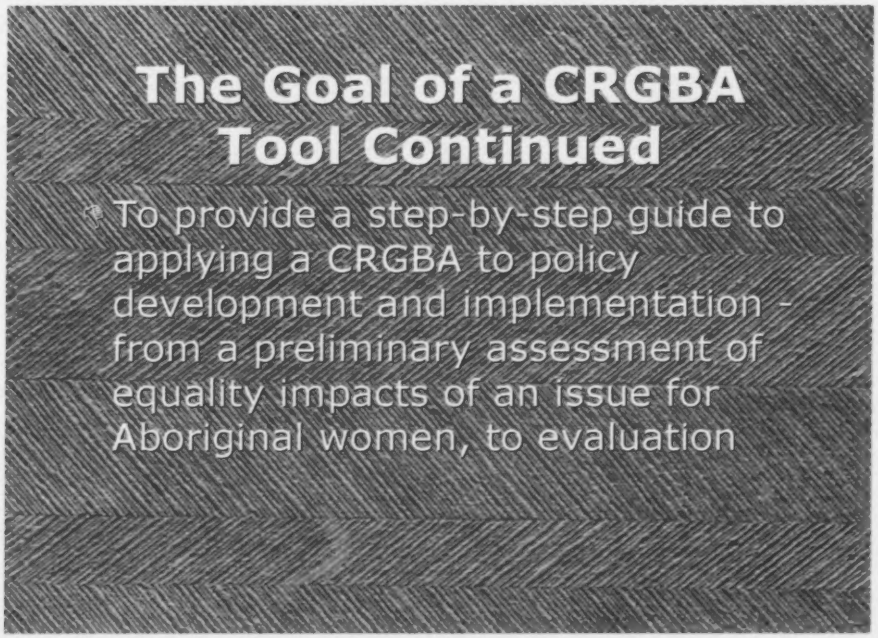

What is a CRGBA?
Builds on the idea of "Gender-based analysis"
An analytical framework that takes into account not only gender, but race
A tool used to identify unique needs, perspectives and rights of Aboriginal women

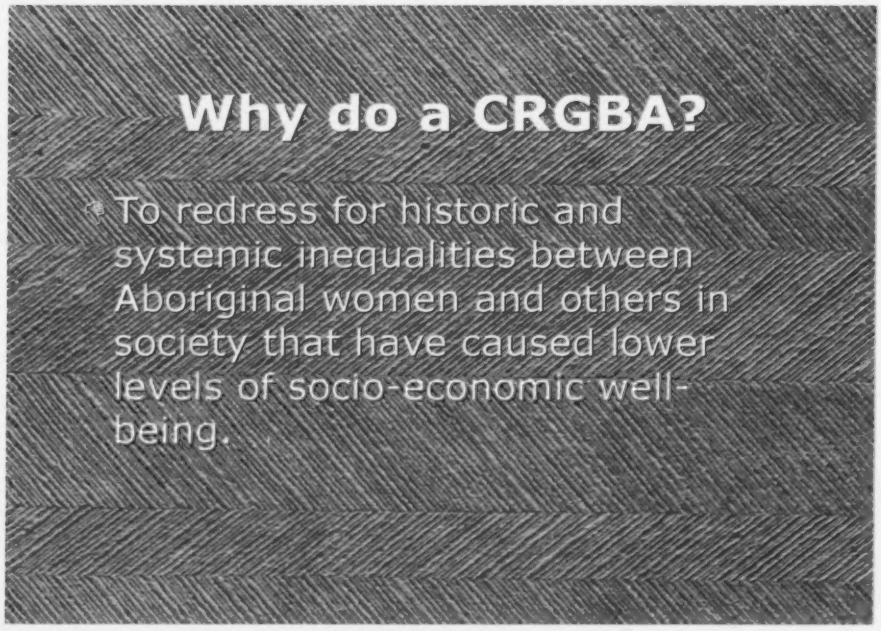

Who applies a CRGBA?
Policy-makers
Decision-makers
Practitioners
Legislators
Governments (Federal, Provincial/Territorial and Aboriginal)

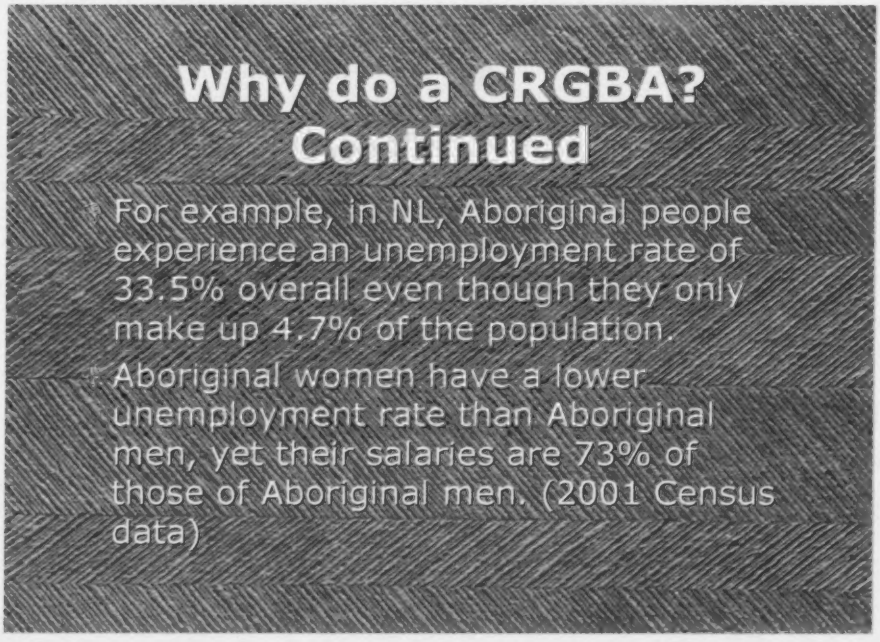

An Example
A policy analyst has been asked to evaluate what the priorities are for new housing programs in St. John's.
Applying a GBA, the analyst might simply look at statistics on women's housing need or meet with women's groups.


An Example Continued
Applying a CRGBA, the analyst would speak specifically to Aboriginal women's groups and look not only at women-specific statistics, but also those that apply to Aboriginal Peoples or, if available, to Aboriginal women.


The Goal of a CRGBA Tool
To ensure the voices of Aboriginal women are heard
To ensure that the continuing impacts of historical inequalities relevant to Aboriginal women in Canada are acknowledged and addressed in current policy development and implementation


The Goal of a CRGBA Tool Continued
To provide a step-by-step guide to applying a CRGBA to policy development and implementation - from a preliminary assessment of equality impacts of an issue for Aboriginal women, to evaluation


Why do a CRGBA?
To redress for historic and systemic inequalities between Aboriginal women and others in society that have caused lower levels of socio-economic well-being.


Why do a CRGBA? Continued
For example, in NL, Aboriginal people experience an unemployment rate of 33.5% overall even though they only make up 4.7% of the population.
Aboriginal women have a lower unemployment rate than Aboriginal men, yet their salaries are 73% of those of Aboriginal men. (2001 Census data)

Why do a CRGBA? Continued

- To ensure government policy and programming is inclusive of Aboriginal women, in design, approach and implementation
- To ensure Aboriginal women's aspirations are addressed - at the provincial level and/or community level

Why do a CRGBA? International & National Commitments

- International commitment made by Canada in 1995, arising from the Beijing Conference on Women's 5th Year Review where Canada committed to "a systemic approach to gender inclusion" leading to the *Federal Plan for Gender Equality* now called *The Agenda for Gender Equality*

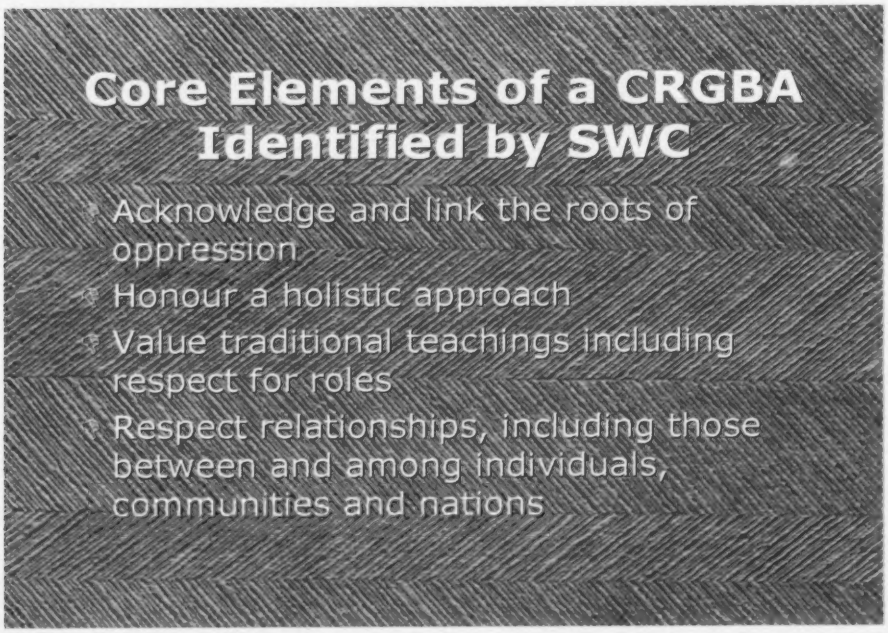
Why do a CRGBA? National Developments

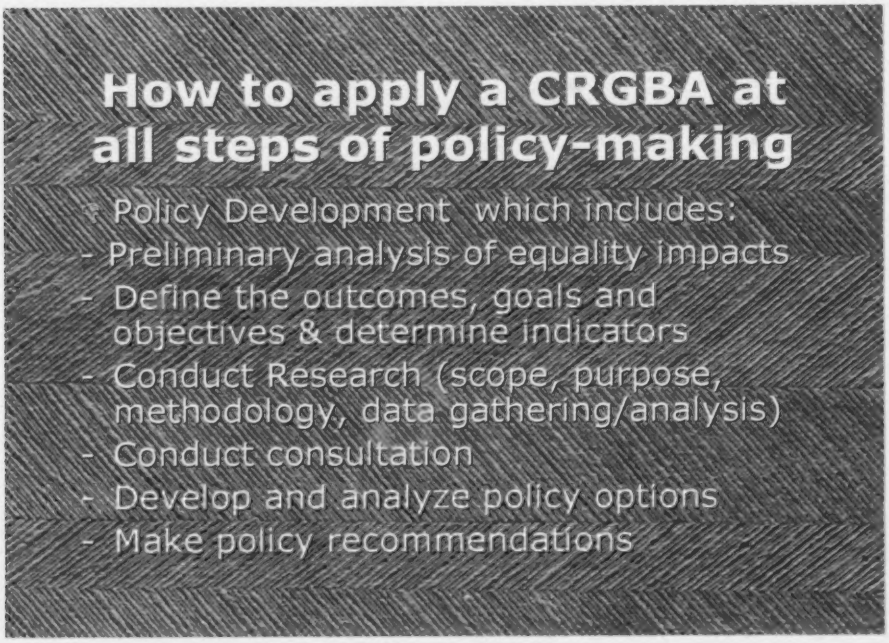
- Recommendation #20 from the 1st National Aboriginal Women's Summit, here in NL, in 2007:
  Implementing a culturally relevant gender based analysis framework in all legislative, policy and programming at all government levels will provide critical insight into the current situation forcing outcomes to be more holistic and inclusive.

Why do a CRGBA: Provincial Commitments

- 2005 Speeches from the Throne:

"Government will integrate women's voices and perspectives, including those of Aboriginal women, when formulating public policies. It will also enhance the use of GBA across departments, agencies, boards and commissions to evaluate and advance the status of women in our province."


Core Elements of a CRGBA Identified by SWC
Acknowledge and link the roots of oppression
Honour a holistic approach
Value traditional teachings including respect for roles
Respect relationships, including those between and among individuals, communities and nations


How to apply a CRGBA at all steps of policy-making
Policy Development which includes:
- Preliminary analysis of equality impacts
- Define the outcomes, goals and objectives & determine indicators
- Conduct Research (scope, purpose, methodology, data gathering/analysis)
- Conduct consultation
- Develop and analyze policy options
- Make policy recommendations

Policy-Making Steps Continued

- Policy Implementation which includes:
  - Communicating the Initiative
  - Program and Service Design
  - Program and Service Delivery
  - Evaluation

Conclusion

- This presentation provides an overview of the definition of a CRGBA, its goals and rationale and how to apply it.
- The workshop is meant to provide an opportunity for workshop participants to look at how you can use a CRGBA in your own lives.

Appendix H – Minister Pottle's Speech

Good evening esteemed Elders, Leslie MacLeod, President of the Advisory Council on The Status of Women, facilitator Judy White and the Conference Steering Committee, delegates and invited guests.

It is an honour and a pleasure to be with you here in Gander this evening to speak on behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Honourable Danny Williams, Premier.

Friends, here we are at the fourth Provincial Aboriginal Women's Conference and we have much to celebrate as we gather here in Central Newfoundland this evening.

You are an impressive group of talented, diverse women from Aboriginal communities across this vast province. You represent a growing force for economic and social change in Newfoundland and Labrador.

What Aboriginal women are achieving here in this province is gaining notice across the country. Newfoundland and Labrador is recognized as a leader in addressing the needs of Aboriginal women. An excellent example of this is when we made history in 2007 by hosting the first-ever National Aboriginal Women's Summit. The impact of this event, which brought this province's community of Aboriginal Women to the national stage, is still being felt.

It's worth noting that a Provincial Working Group was formed in July 2008 to review recommendations made at the summit, and that group is still hard at work today.

The topic of this conference, —Aboriginal Women and Policy Development || stems from one of these recommendations; that the needs of Aboriginal women should be better incorporated into government programs and polices. s an Aboriginal woman, and as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, I recognize that we still have much work to do that on that front. However, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is working hard to achieve this.

And, **we are listening.**

I will spare you the reading of a "shopping list" of what this administration has done to address the needs of Aboriginal women, but I will give one notable example that I believe speaks to the theme of this conference.

February's announcement of $800 million for infrastructure throughout the province included the investment of $2 million for a new pre-trial detention facility in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. This facility will provide a safe and secure location to hold both women and youth who are awaiting court appearance.

This pre-trial detention centre is the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's response to a very real need expressed by Aboriginal women in Labrador.

There was a public outcry for a facility in Labrador that addresses the unique needs of young people and women, particularly Aboriginal women. And the province has responded.

We know that while in custody, women and youth face unique challenges and it is not appropriate for them to be held in the same facility as men.

This new facility will ensure their needs are met.

Will this facility address all the of the problems Aboriginal women face in the justice system? **Of course not**, but it is a very significant response to the needs of Aboriginal women by this government.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to Aboriginal women, understanding their issues and needs, and recognizing that their collective voice is important in the decision-making process that determines policy.

To put it mildly, this has not always been the case for Aboriginal women or women in general. The work you are doing here this weekend is helping to change that. It is important work.

At first blush, talking about a subject like —policy development || might sound a little "dry". But it isn't. You are examining the most effective ways for Aboriginal women's needs to be understood by government decision makers – people like me.

That's a very empowering thing to be doing. You will become more effective at influencing and shaping what governments do that impacts the lives of Aboriginal women.

As well, the results of this conference will be provided to the Provincial Working Group for their consideration as they make recommendations to the Province.

I have always believed that by looking forward, taking a leadership role, and discussing ideas and issues that concern Aboriginal Women, we will be on the path to more fulfilled and richer lives. That is why this conference is so important – it is a sharing of experiences and a discussion of issues by Aboriginal women across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Aboriginal women's issues are one of the top priorities of the Williams' Government. Our government remains committed to assist Aboriginal women and the province's Aboriginal communities.

One broad-based initiative that many of you are familiar with is the *Violence Prevention Initiative*.

This is six-year program, launched in 2006, with an investment of $9.2 million. In Budget 2007, the funding was increased by $200,000 with expanded criteria that came out of the National Aboriginal Women's Summit.

We must do everything we can to end the systemic violence we see in our communities. It is a deeply rooted problem with no simple or obvious solution, but we are making progress. I am very pleased to see that the Violence Prevention Initiative, through the Women's Policy Office, is funding many progressive programs in Aboriginal communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, such as healing journeys, retreats, workshops, community healing strategies, and poster campaigns, to name a few.

Now, I would like to speak personally for a moment. Each woman here today is certainly a strong aboriginal woman who has worked to improve her community. However, I want to speak of the work of one particular woman who has also worked diligently to strengthen her community.

I'm a bit of an Oprah fan – like many of you no doubt. She hosted a program some time ago which spoke of how we come full circle in our lives when you are able to take your **pain** and turn it into **power**. And that is exactly what this woman did. I am speaking of Charlotte Wolfrey who is here with us at this conference.

Many of you know Charlotte's story, and she has spoke of it publicly so I know that she is okay for me to share it with you.

Charlotte's terrible pain was that she tragically lost her daughter at the hands of her violent spouse. That is a pain that no mother should have to endure. After some time of healing, Charlotte took this painful situation and became active in her both her community and the entire Labrador region and became a voice, fighting violence against women.

She's lobbied for RCMP for her community, authored a report on family violence and is a driving force of the Rigolet Partnership Against Family Violence.

Through this committee, Charlotte has actively lobbied this government for assistance to help establish a shelter for women and children in Rigolet. And this government has listened

It is my great pleasure to announce that the The Rigolet Partnership Against Family Violence will receive $30,000 to oversee the transformation of a residential property into a shelter for women and children who are experiencing family violence. The renovations will include ensuring the shelter is wheelchair accessible and that safe-house operating standards are met.

This funding will help to provide a safe haven for women and children while educating survivors of family violence of the options available to them.

Please join me in congratulating the Rigolet Partnership Against Family Violence.

(APPLAUSE)

Thank you.

I can't stress enough how important it is that you become aware of all of the funding options that are available through programs such as the Violence Prevention Initiative and to take every reasonable opportunity to apply for that funding.

In my own Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, we have annual funding of $100,000 for what is called the Suicide and Detrimental Lifestyles Program.

Take-up on the funding for this program has not always been at the level we'd like it to be.

However, I am pleased to report to you this evening that we have a number of applications under the program and expect to be issuing funding on the lion's share of what we have budgeted for this fiscal year.

In closing,

While it may not always have been universally recognized, Aboriginal women have contributed generously to the cultural, social, and economic fabric of Newfoundland and Labrador.

And in recent years we have come together as a powerful force for positive change. We are becoming more outspoken, more organized, and more effective in achieving our goals, thanks in no small part by our ability to gather at events such as this conference, to discuss our challenges while developing strategies that will affect change for the better.

All of you have much to be proud of. Congratulations.
Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak and please enjoy the rest of the conference.

Appendix I – Bios of Speakers

BIOS OF PRESENTERS

4TH Provincial Aboriginal Women's Conference

March 3rd & 4th, 2009

Bobbi Boland

Bobbie Boland has been exploring the practice of gender analysis for about 10 years and has been looking specifically at FASD for the past three years. Bobbie is a social worker and her work as a consultant has been wide and varied, including training in the areas of conflict resolution and anti-violence, research, community development and the facilitation of groups.

Tammy Drew

Tammy Drew, CAFM, CGA, was in high school when she noticed that the Director of Finance for her First Nation, the Miawpukek First Nation of Newfoundland and Labrador, was a non-native person. Knowing that the First Nation's employment policy was to have all native employees, she made it her goal to get the qualifications necessary for that position. She then entered the CGA program, studying part time and receiving her designation in 1996. In 1998, she did indeed become the Miawpukek First Nation's Director of Finance. She is currently the First Nation's General Manager, responsible for all band programs, including the finance department.
Tammy Drew has also been actively involved with the AFOA, Chairperson of Netukulijik Commercial Fisheries, Chairperson of Portfolios Holder meetings and Chairs the Directors and managers monthly meetings.

Luanne Leamon

Luanne Leamon has worked with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for thirty years in various political, executive, and management positions. Her academic background is in English Literature and Philosophy of Law. Her areas of interest and expertise include literacy, management development, policy development, and women's issues. She is currently Director of Research and Planning with Women's Policy Office.

Céleste McKay

Céleste McKay is a Métis woman from Manitoba. She has a Bachelor of Social Work degree from the University of Manitoba, a LL.B. degree from the University of Victoria and a LL.M. from the University of Ottawa that focused on the international right to health of Indigenous women in Canada. Céleste has worked in the areas of human rights, policy, research and advocacy work, primarily on behalf of Indigenous women's organizations. Currently, she works as a Consultant in national and international areas related to Indigenous Peoples, particularly Indigenous women, often representing the Native Women's Association of Canada. Her greatest source of joy is her son, Evan Raoul Chartrand.

Melita Paul

Melita Paul works as a Community Health Worker with the Labrador Metis Nation. She has been working in this position for nearly 7 years. This position involves many aspects of community health education; diabetes awareness & prevention, HIV/ Aids promotion, Suicide awareness, Violence Prevention work and much more. Melita is also trained as a VAAT (violence action & awareness training) Facilitator, and Smoking Cessation Facilitator. Prior to this position Melita worked for 6 years as Town Manager in her home community of Charlottetown, Labrador. She is actively involved in many regional and provincial organizations representing the Aboriginal population. She is Chairperson of the Southern Labrador Family Centre's Board of Directors. She also plays a vital role in the promotion of Tobacco control by being involved with the Smokers Help Line and the Alliance For the Control of Tobacco. In 2008 Melita was the recipient of the Canadian Diabetes Association's Regional Volunteer of the Year Award for her contributions to that organization. Melita has a passion for her Metis culture and heritage and is very proud of her accomplishments both in her work and her volunteer roles.

She is a devoted wife and the proud Mother of two adult children, MacKay who is 20 and Alyssa who is 19, but her greatest joy has been her 1 year old Grandson, Kobe. Being a grandmother has put a different perspective on her life.

Judy A. White

Judy White is a Mi'kmaq and member of the Flat Bay Band. She currently resides in Conne River where she works as the Self Government Advisor for Miawpukek First Nation. Ms. White completed a Bachelor of Laws degree from Dalhousie Law School with particular emphasis upon Aboriginal Law. Ms. White also completed the Intensive Program of Lands, Resources and First Nations Government at Osgoode Hall Law School where. Ms. White is currently a partner

with the Law firm of McDonald White located at Conne River, Newfoundland, which specialises in aboriginal law. She has served as a Policy and Planning Specialist for Women's Policy Office on Aboriginal Women's Issues. She has served as the Chairperson of the National Centre for First Nations Governance and currently holds the vice-chair position. As well, she is the vice chairperson of the First Nations Statistical Institute, first ever Aboriginal Crown Corporation. Ms. White is a board of director for Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.

Hon. Patty Pottle,
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

Born in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Patty Pottle grew up in Hopedale, Labrador. After graduating from Amos Comenius Memorial School in her hometown, Ms. Pottle continued her education and received her Bachelor's of Education at Memorial University. She was the first graduate of the Bachelor of Education Native and Northern Studies degree program.

Ms. Pottle went back to Hopedale and taught for six years at the school from which she graduated. She is a well-known entrepreneur, with three businesses in the community. Ms. Pottle is the owner of D.J's gift shop, which was a dream of hers to open, D.J. Properties, and the Amaguk Inn, an 18-bed full-service facility

Ms. Pottle has served on a variety of boards and committees including: Tourism Nunatsiavut * Chair; Tasiujatsoak Trust * Trustee; Kamatsiatet Committee * Chair; Former Town Councilor; Hopedale Heritage Festival; Former Agvituk Historical Society Member; Former Board Member of Labrador Inuit Association; Former Government Member of Government Nunatsiavut (Transitional).

Ms. Pottle is the first female Inuit Member of the House of Assembly to serve in the Provincial Government and is the first female Inuit Cabinet Minister.

Minster Pottle currently resides in Hopedale with her husband Eddy, and her two children, Danielle and Joey.

Appendix J – Delegates List

St, John's Friendship Centre (5) Karen Miller Emma Reelis Tabitha Blake Brenda Blake Maria Bast	**Miawpukek First Nation (Conne River)** Tammy Drew Yvonne John Theresa O'Keefe Mardina Joe Coleen Lambert Tina Benoit
Labrador Métis Nation Melita Paul, Charlottetown Christa Turnbull, Charlottetown Catherine Earles, Happy Valley Susie Penney, Mary's Harbour Linda Cull of Happy Valley Goose Bay Elizabeth Rose from Forteau	**Innu Nation** (5) **Mushuau Innu, Natuashish** Stella Saunders Monique Rich Dawn Marie Rich **Sheshatshiu** Helen Andrew Helen Aster Madeline Benuen
Nunatsiavut (Inuit) (5) Charlotte Wolfrey, Rigolet Andrea Webb, Happy Valley-Goose Bay Glenda Sheppard, Postville, member of Inspiring Young Women group Sybilla Bennett, Hopedale Annie Evans, Makkovik (Elder)	**Labrador Friendship Centre** (5) Patricia Fleming Mandy Hope Florence Oliver Barbara McGowan Stephanie Flowers
Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network (NAWN) Marie Eastman Holly Muise (youth delegate) Bonnie Rotchford Anne Hart Odelle Pike Patricia Brockway	**Federation of Newfoundland Indians (FNI)** Carlotta Fenmore Carolyn Sheppard Marlene Farrell Felicia M. Benoit (Student) Audrey Gracie Jo-Anne Prosper

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador	
Luanne Leamon	Director of Research and Planning, Women's Policy Office
Erin Molloy	Communications Specialist, Women's Policy Office
Kay Hillier	Clerk, Women's Policy Office
Maeve Baird	Director of Policy and Planning, Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
Teresa Evans	Senior Policy Analyst, Aboriginal Affairs, Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
Other Invited Guests	
Judy White	Facilitator
Celeste McKay	Celeste McKay Consulting, Winnipeg, MB
Bobbi Boland	Presenter, St. John's
Leslie MacLeod	President, PACSW
Yvonne Gillingham	Gander Status of Women Council
Cynthia Benoit	Assistant to the Conference Facilitator
Banquet Guests	
Honourable Patty Pottle	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
Paula Norman	Constituency Assistant, representing Kevin O'Brien, MHA for Gander and Minister of Government Services and the Government Purchasing Agency
John Tompkins	Director of Communications, Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
Banquet Guests	